NOW & THEN

THE APPALACHIAN MAGAZINE

CENTER FOR APPALACHIAN STUDIES AND SERVICES EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

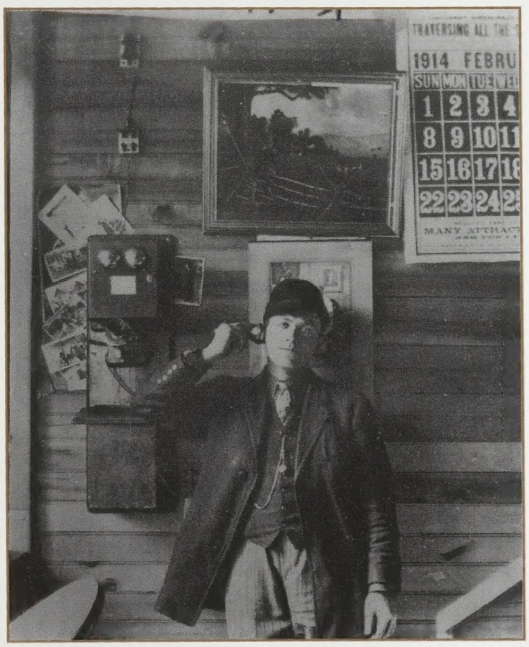
Vol. 29 No. 1 $8.00

APPALACHIAN INDUSTRY

READER SURVEY ENCLOSED

Appalachian Industry

From the days of copper wires to the age of fiber optics, few industries have had a greater impact on Appalachia and the world than telecommunications. The word "telecommunication" is a compound of the Greek prefix *tele*, meaning "far off," and the Latin *communicare*, meaning "to share." Thus, telecommunications is the sharing of information over a distance.



THEN

An unidentified young man poses for the camera while making a phone call. Photo courtesy Archives of Appalachia, James Agee Film Project Photographs Collection, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee.

NOW

Students in the East Tennessee State University D.P. Culp University Center engaged in communication—just not with one another. Photo courtesy Charlie Warden.

On the cover: Eastman is a global specialty chemical company that produces a broad range of advanced materials, additives and functional products, special chemicals, and fibers that are found in products people use every day. This photo shows the company's largest manufacturing site, located in Kingsport, Tennessee. Kingsport is also home to Eastman's corporate headquarters. Photo courtesy Eastman Chemical Company.

Appalachian Industry

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Idleness and Industry

Roberta Herrin
Director, Center for Appalachian Studies and Services

At an early age, I learned that industry (with a lower-case "i") was the cornerstone of human worth, the foundation of our daily lives, our reason to exist. Nobody in my community ever took a vacation. Cows had to be milked. Pigs and chickens fed. Beans picked. Had we known Isaac Watts's poem "Against Idleness and Mischief" (1715), we would have agreed with it. Better known as "How Doth the Little Busy Bee," the poem enjoins us to keep busy, like the bee, lest our idleness be used for evil ends: "For Satan finds some Mischief still / For idle Hands to do."

By the nineteenth century, Industry (with a capital "I") changed the nature of work and the concept of idleness. Watts's premise became the subject of ridicule, as in Lewis Carroll's Alice's Adventures in Wonderland (1865). When Alice tries to recite Watts's preachy little poem, it comes out all wrong: "How doth the little crocodile / Improve his shining tail." In Wonderland, Watts's ideas about idleness are rendered nonsense. Industry and mechanized processes theoretically freed workers from manual labor and provided "free time," so the word "idleness" morphed into "leisure." How could leisure be the devil's tool, when it had been won by hard, Industrial work?

None of this discourse mattered in my home. We continued to believe that idleness and outright sin were good buddies, if not close relatives, so it was vital to demonstrate (Dare I say "flaunt"?) industry. To prove our worth, we gave visitors a tour of the cellar, with its shelves of canned beans and tomatoes, crocks of pickled corn and kraut, and bins of potatoes and apples. We showed off Mama's quilts. She trotted out the Dutch Doll, Lone Star, Drunkard's Path, and the crazy quilt, with all our names embroidered on its irregular swatches. Privately and to each other, we marveled at our own work. I recall standing at the window with Mama, watching Daddy mow a field of hay. "Look at how your daddy mows," she said. "See how the hay falls in neat rows. Nobody can swing a scythe like Lee."

In addition to farm work, my father also worked in Industry, at North American Rayon Corporation (NARC) in Elizabethton, Tennessee. Locals called it "The Plant." In the history of the Appalachian region, "industry" is romanticized, and "Industry" demonized. Without question, workplaces such as NARC could rival idleness as a tool of the devil that devalued human worth. But my father and thousands of Appalachians like him didn't debate the virtues of industry over Industry. They took equal pride in mowing hay and making rayon, and they had neither idle time nor leisure time. Whether NARC valued my father's work was beside the point. He valued it.

At a recent lecture by George Collins on the history of the Magnavox Company, the audience included former Magnavox workers who did not demonize the Company but were emotional and passionate about the televisions, radios, record players, and fine cabinetry they made. Their work in Industry gave them worth. At bottom, the man or woman who recognizes the connection between work and self-worth won't debate the distinctions among idleness, leisure, industry, and Industry. They are just glad to be busy, to be doing useful work, keeping clear of the devil's playground. ❖

Editor's Notebook

Fred Sauceman

Howard Atwood. Photo by author.

Howard Atwood doesn't eat walnuts. Instead, he turns them into art.

The retired Lockheed-Martin engineer starts scouting out walnut trees in the North Carolina counties of Buncombe and Henderson in late summer. By the end of the fall each year, he has collected some 10,000 walnuts.

When Howard Atwood looks at a walnut, he doesn't think fudge or cookies. His mother and wife punch out all the nut meat for baking. Howard, on the other hand, values the part of the nut most people throw away.

Those typically discarded shells are transformed into decorative bowls in the spotless workshop of Howard Atwood.

Although he has seen pine needle baskets with a slice of walnut shell in the middle, he's never come across any bowls quite like his.

He learned the craft from Luke Griles, a retired Presbyterian minister from Burnsville who had learned it almost fifty years ago from a lady in Arkansas, who had learned it from a relative in Missouri.

"When Luke was in ill health, he tried to pass on the process to his children, but they felt it was too time-consuming and too delicate," Howard says. "Luke was concerned that no one else would know how to make these bowls after his death."

Luke Griles died in 2005. Howard remembers how he cleaned his walnuts in an old wringer washer.

Howard applies the precision of his aircraft maintenance training to the art of bowl making. He dumps the walnuts into the back of his pickup and leaves them there for four weeks. Then they go into a wire mesh wagon and the hulls are blasted off with a power washer.

The nuts soak in five-gallon buckets for a day or so and are washed again. Drying takes a couple of months, and the nuts are usually ready to be cut in February.

Howard cuts them using a three-bladed table saw and a specially designed oak block that assures even slices and uncut fingers.

"And never stand behind the saw," he cautions.

Metal bowls from Big Lots, plastic funnels, and used plastic butter containers from upstairs in the Atwood kitchen function as molds around which the walnut shells are aligned.

Walnuts are sorted by size with a sizing block. Howard's coding system would mean nothing to anyone else, but to him, a four is "great big" and a fifteen "little bitty."

"There is a wide variety of holes to give you the lacy effect when you use thirty or forty walnut shell slices in a bowl," he says.

From fall walnut gathering to completion, it's about a four-month process.

Most of the bowls are used for decoration. Some serve as nut bowls. Howard's mother transforms others into candy dishes by inserting plastic containers. Larger ones become bread baskets.

"I can make walnut bowls at my own pace and make them mine," Howard says.

Nothing is wasted. Broken walnut pieces are used as "fit-ins."

Howard Atwood is both painstaking craftsman and creative artist. He has handled thousands of walnuts, but, like snowflakes, he says each one is unique.

And so is Howard Atwood, an Appalachian industry of one. ❖

Former Eastman Researcher Recalls Monumental Days of Scientific Advancement, Secrecy at Oak Ridge

Brad Lifford

Anne and Howard Young. Photo by author.

The lunch that Howard and Anne Young shared on an afternoon in the early 1980s would have been unremarkable, not unlike countless others they had shared in the decades since their marriage soon after World War II. But Howard had gotten a book that echoed a distant, common past for both of them—a past in which they were young scientists working on the Manhattan Project, the top-secret U.S. military effort to produce the first atomic bomb.

Howard was reading *City Behind a Fence*, the 1981 account by two University of Tennessee history professors, Charles W. Johnson and Charles O. Jackson, of the rapid creation of a wartime "secret city," Oak Ridge, Tennessee, that launched the world's atomic age. More than halfway through the book, Young came across a revelation that startled him: Some employees at Oak Ridge doubled as operatives who reported security breaches by fellow employees to Army intelligence.

Now eighty-eight and living in the same house that he and Anne built within earshot of Eastman Chemical Company in Kingsport, Tennessee, Young recalls that lunchtime revelation with amusement.

"I was reading a paragraph to my wife at lunch; I hadn't known that they had used internal operatives at Y-12," Young says, using the code name for the Oak Ridge plant created to enrich uranium for an atomic

bomb. "I looked at her and she said, 'Yes, I know. I was one of them.'

"In all those years, she had never told me that before. I had no idea."

The Youngs are among the several thousand people with ties to Eastman Chemical Company who played a pivotal role in the U.S. war effort in Oak Ridge. Known then as Tennessee Eastman and a part of Eastman Kodak, the corporation was contracted by the Army to operate Y-12, which employed as many as 24,000 people at its peak. Many of the thousands who served as plant operators at Y-12 were young women recruited from throughout Appalachia; they signed on for factory work that was not revealed to them in advance, for security reasons, and they were transported to a place also not disclosed in advance.

And, more than sixty-five years after the United States dropped the bomb known as "Little Boy" on Hiroshima—a bomb that contained U-235 enriched at Y-12—the Eastman contribution to the war effort is still a revelation to many, even in the city where it is headquartered.

David Valentine, a chemist who retired from Eastman, became a history evangelist of sorts in late 2012, speaking to civic groups about those times and their importance.

"I saw Kingsport's mayor [Dennis Phillips] out one day, and Dennis said, 'You know, no one knows how important Eastman was to the war effort. Would you go around and talk about it?'" Valentine said. "And he's right. Not enough people know the story. I think part of it is the culture of secrecy that surrounded the project, and that culture just carried over through the years."

Though Howard Young enjoyed an estimable career after the war—he was later head of research for Tennessee Eastman, a company with a global imprint, and he conceived the idea of creating a coal gasification plant there—the Youngs lead a quiet life. Howard used to give the occasional talks to civic groups about the Manhattan Project and Eastman's role in Oak Ridge, but not anymore. "Arthritis," he says.

But Young is, in fact, quite mobile, with an intellect that remains razor sharp. He is a frequent visitor to the public library and juggles reading five books simultaneously. Most at Eastman would not know his name, even as the head of research some twenty years ago, and they certainly would not know his place in history in the Manhattan Project: They would not know that it was Young who handed off the first U-235 that would then go to Los Alamos, New Mexico, where it would be used to make Little Boy.

Young points out that he was "only" a junior chemist then. He was pursuing his doctorate at Brown University when his mentor, Charles A. Kraus, suggested he join a handful of young scientists and go to work at a place called "Dogpatch." It was another name for the secret city that the Army carved out of the East Tennessee woods near Knoxville.

"Four or five of us left Providence at the same time," Young says, "and I boarded a train with a sealed envelope that I couldn't open until I was on the train. Inside that sealed envelope was another sealed envelope that I couldn't open until our next stop, and inside that envelope was a letter that said I was going to Knoxville."

From Knoxville, Young moved on to Oak Ridge and to a daily life of research with an end purpose that was kept secret. The city grew from nothing to a place where eventually 75,000 people would live and work during the war. When a nearby lab let it be known that it needed a good analytical chemist, Young suggested Anne Maven, a promising student at Brown, and the woman who would eventually become his wife.

THEY BOTH STILL SMILE WHEN RECALLING HER SUBMISSION OF REPORTS, WHICH HAPPENED IN A MANNER STRAIGHT OUT OF A COLD WAR SPY NOVEL.

Only those highest in the Manhattan Project ranks knew that U-235 was being produced at Oak Ridge, and fewer still knew where the uranium would be headed afterward. Young did not officially know. No one talked about uranium at Y-12, instead using the code name "tubealloy," but Young had a notion of what he was helping create.

"You didn't talk about uranium at Y-12," Young says. "We did not know they were making bombs, but we assumed they were making bombs. There had been discoveries in 1939 that uranium could undergo fission. We didn't talk about uranium, but you can't hide from the chemist what he's working with."

Then came a fateful morning in 1945, well after midnight, when Young and his colleagues were visited by an Army courier sent to pick up a package of material in a baseball-sized, gold- and steel-lined container, which was inside a

rosewood box. Young handed that courier the first U-235 produced in Oak Ridge.

"It was around two or three in the morning," Young recalls. "The courier hooked it to his wrist with a pair of handcuffs, and he walked off into the dark. We stepped out into the hall and watched him walk away, and two men with pistols joined him. None of us dared follow him. It was good material that he took with him. And it went into the bomb."

Young talks about his time at Oak Ridge and his career at Eastman without the slightest hint of self-aggrandizement. He even notes that the talk he used to give was drawn partly from that given by another Manhattan Project scientist, George Akin, a chemical engineer at Eastman Kodak.

Eastman was also pivotal in the production of RDX, a powerful explosive used to sink German U-boats. Yet neither Young nor his wife are bothered that this Kingsport company's role in World War II is not well known by the current generation and will probably be less well known by generations hence.

For many years after the war, no one talked about Oak Ridge. Neither of the Youngs kept a diary. It would have been treasonous. Howard mentions that a machinist he saw daily at Eastman helped machine the explosive pieces that detonated the atomic bomb that would be dropped on Nagasaki, but Young did not learn this until after he retired.

"There was a culture of fear and respect at Oak Ridge," Howard says. "You were told that if you talked about anything you saw there, you would be tried for treason and shot. Later, for many years after the war, no one knew what you could say and when you could say it. We didn't know what had been declassified."

Consequently, after that 1980s lunch, when Howard Young learned that the woman so close to him had kept a secret from him for decades, he was not as shocked as some husbands might be. Anne Young says the messages were made abundantly clear to the people of Dogpatch.

"There were signs up with messages such as, 'Loose lips sink ships,'" she says, "and everyone was made aware that you could be tried for treason if you talked. I submitted weekly reports, but I don't recall ever turning anyone in."

They both still smile when recalling her submission of reports, which happened in a manner straight out of a Cold War spy novel. It involved her slipping out the back door of a shop and visiting an "Acme Credit Corporation," which, despite the sign, was not in the business of extending loans.

"Every week we'd go into Knoxville and visit a department store, and there was a little book department on the second floor we would always visit, and every time we visited there she would excuse herself to visit the ladies' room," Howard recalls. "And every time, she was gone long enough that I usually became concerned. I would wonder where she was."

Anne smiles. "The ladies' room had a back door. I would walk out the back door, down the stairs, and down the street to the Acme loan company. I wasn't interested in a loan, of course. I was there to turn in my report."

Howard Young still ponders how many pounds of fissionable material were in Little Boy—somewhere between seventy-five and 150 pounds, he says. He does not ponder the necessity of the bomb, though. The bomb was necessary, he says.

"When I used to give talks," Young says, "there would be former soldiers in the audience who would come up to me afterward and say, 'I was on Okinawa waiting to go to Japan to die when the bombs dropped.'"

Ever the scientist, Young also used to ask those in the audience to produce a dime from their pockets. He knew what they were thinking: This was going to be a cheap talk.

"I told them, 'You can keep the dime,'" Young says. "I told them to look at the dime and imagine if you cut that dime into four pieces. One of those pieces of that dime represents the amount of matter that disappeared from the universe to destroy Hiroshima." ❖

Brad Lifford is a former reporter for the *Kingsport Times-News*.

Girls of Atomic City Tells Story of Young Women Who Helped Win World War II

Brad Lifford

Photo by James Edward Westcott, courtesy National Archives.

As a longtime writer and journalist with a wide spectrum of experience, Denise Kiernan would not consider herself an uninformed person. But in the process of research for one story, she came across a mysterious photo that drew her deeply into another.

Kiernan admits that upon seeing this photo by Ed Westcott—a black-and-white image of young women in an industrial scientific setting, all of them sitting at their own control stations with various knobs and dials—she was transfixed and perplexed. The setting was the Y-12 plant in Oak Ridge, Tennessee; the context was secret work being done for the Manhattan Project, the umbrella term used for the U.S. effort to produce the first atomic bomb for combat.

"This particular photo by Ed Westcott showed women who were operators in a long room, and both sides of the room were lined with these panels covered in panels and knobs," Kiernan said.

Westcott was an official U.S. government photographer during World War II. "His photo created this incredible sense of depth. I started reading the caption, and it said that these were young women, recent high-school graduates, and they were enriching uranium for the world's first atomic bomb. The first thing that went through my mind is that I have a huge knowledge gap."

Not that Kiernan was alone. She turned to her husband, Joseph D'Agnese, also a writer and a journalist well-versed in science, and asked about Oak Ridge, about the Manhattan Project. He of course knew the subject material.

"Then I asked him if he knew anything about Tennessee high-school girls enriching uranium," Kiernan said. "He said, 'Nope, nothing.'"

That so-called "knowledge gap" became the road to a book: *The Girls of Atomic City: The Untold Story of the Women Who Helped Win World War II*. A seven-year

project that involved detailed research and dozens of interviews by Kiernan came to fruition in March with the book's publication. Her account includes profiles of some of the women—high-school and college graduates, secretaries, calutron cubicle operators, statisticians, chemists—who committed to working in a newly-born city that was secret to most of the world. There is also a sixteen-page spread of photos by Westcott.

"Obviously, there's been much written about the Manhattan Project itself," Kiernan said, "but most of that writing has been about the decision-makers, the men, the scientists. That's almost always the primary focus of a book. I wanted to know who these young women were and what they were doing there. I really got hooked."

Carved out of forests and hills not far from Knoxville, Oak Ridge grew from mostly wilderness in 1942 to a city of 75,000 by 1945. The entire town was contained within security gates, and all who entered Oak Ridge had ID badges.

Many of those who worked there were women. The creation of Oak Ridge and the work there dovetailed with a moment in history when women entered the workforce en masse, and Kiernan's diligent work unearthed a broad canvas of stories from those who chose to go there, oftentimes at a moment's notice.

The women who are profiled in *Girls of Atomic City* include Celia Szapka, a secretary who transferred from the Manhattan Project's original offices in New York City; Helen Hall, a calutron cubicle operator who was recruited from a coffee shop and

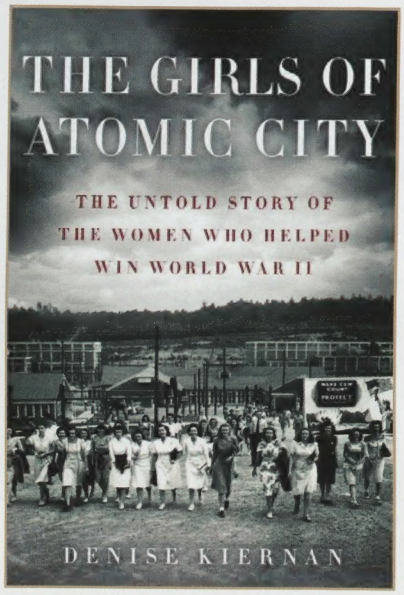

Photo courtesy Simon & Schuster.

pharmacy in Eagleville, Tennessee; and Kattie Strickland, an African American janitorial services worker from Auburn, Alabama, who arrived in Oak Ridge with her husband and was forced to live separately from him.

"In some cases, there were seventeen- and eighteen-year-old farm girls who were hopping on buses and they weren't told where they were going or what they were going to be doing. They were just told that what they were going to do was going to help end the war, and that was enough," Kiernan said. "One thing I was struck by is these were women who had a tremendous spirit of adventure. Women were entering the workforce because so many men were gone to war, and there was this real spirit to be part of a great American cause.

"There was a phrase I heard a lot from people during my interviews: We were all in the same boat. No matter who you were, you were probably waiting on someone to come home."

Kiernan was heartened to find that because so many teenaged women worked at Oak Ridge, there were still many surviving, founding residents to interview for her project. She grew close to some of them. She discovered that, even with the abundant sense of esprit de corps, life in Oak Ridge could be hard. Security was intense, with warnings that any talk about what went on inside the city would be grounds for treason. There were long lines for goods, a product of the war and the city being self-contained. Because the city was being built literally overnight, mud was everywhere.

And yet, they came. And many stayed. Kattie Strickland, the African American janitorial services worker, settled in Oak Ridge with her husband, Willie, after the war, and their children came to live with them.

"Celia (Szapka) was working as a secretary in one of the original Manhattan Project offices in New York," Kiernan said, "and she was basically approached by her boss and asked if she would like to transfer to a new office, and she said, 'Where are we going?' He said, 'I can't tell you that. It's a secret city.' She said, 'My mom's not going to be very happy about that.'"

But Celia Szapka did board a bus to become part of the Secret City in East Tennessee, for what, she was told, would be a six- to nine-month stay. Now seventy, she still lives in Oak Ridge.

The Girls of Atomic City is published by Touchstone, a division of Simon & Schuster. ❖

Brad Lifford is a former reporter for the *Kingsport Times-News*.

The Kettle Tender

William Kelley Woolfitt

That was the valley of salt, rows of stone
furnaces along Old Greasy, his blistered hands.

That rhythm, steam drill's ring, wheelers
and jim-arounds laboring to their own beat,

hills cut to stubble and gullied by rain,
the dug-out coal-beds, their hungry gape.

How the mid-day sky was dark as sackcloth
from the vapors, the fires. When he gagged,

the boss called him field-tackie,
black Irish. Eyes that swam in steam.

Vats to settle and grain the brine.
Pans he had to lift. Once he dreamed

he drank from a gourd in a Shawnee
woman's cupped hands. Not the river

iridescent, not this crystal rind
that crackles from his skin.

William Kelley Woolfitt teaches creative writing and literature at Lee University in Cleveland, Tennessee. His poetry collection, *Salvager's Arts*, was co-winner of the 2011 Keystone Chapbook Prize.

An Appalachian Rosie the Riveter Recalls the World War II Era

Dolly Withrow

Above: Agnes Kukuchka Smith and her great-granddaughter Candiss. Right: Agnes's ID pin. Photos courtesy author.

Had a nearby woman not dropped a can of cat food in a store, I would never have heard these gripping World War II stories. With her back toward me, the woman stooped to pick up the can. I said, "Some days are like that." She turned around, and I was surprised to recognize Wilma Davis, a friend I had not seen in many years.

She said, "How strange I should meet you this morning because just last night I finished reading your book *Beyond the Apple Orchard*, and you must call the woman who let me borrow it. She has stories you need to hear."

I gave Wilma my phone number and a few days later, Agnes Kukuchka Smith called me. We met several times in her home, where I learned about the ordeals her relatives suffered during World War II and about her experiences as a Rosie the Riveter.

Jacob carried an axe as he and his friend walked toward a forest in Nazi-occupied Poland. The task ahead was gruesome, but with courage and determination, they soldiered onward. When they were deep in the woods, Jacob raised the axe high over his head with the blunt end aimed toward his friend's leg just above the ankle. Slamming it down hard, Jacob broke the young man's leg. Then, the friend reciprocated. Despite intense pain, both men had to feel grateful because with broken legs neither could be forced to march in Hitler's army. The friend's name has been lost in the crevices of time, but the memory and the story of his bravery remain.

During the same reign of terror in Poland, Jacob's brother Rudolf spent seven months inside a small chapel. During the day, he hid under an altar, careful to remain quiet. When the church was closed at night, he was free to leave the protective shelter of the altar to walk around inside the church. His mother went to the church regularly to pray. Hiding food under a cape she wore, she was able to give her son a meal each day. That is how he survived.

A kind farm woman in Poland fed anyone who came by and asked for food. One day, several men approached. She asked if they wanted something to eat. They did, and she fed them. Dressed in civilian clothes, they were members of the Gestapo. After eating, the men forced the kind woman to go outside and dig her own grave. Then they fatally shot her.

A man named Joseph had a family in Poland, and they were hungry. He went into the woods carrying his gun and shot a deer. He wrapped the deer around the back of his neck. When he emerged from the woods, members of the Gestapo captured him and forced him to walk around a nearby church. He was forced to walk around and around that little church until at last he fell to the ground. He was denied both food and water. Bystanders were not allowed to help him. Later, he died on the ground where he had fallen. The populace was not permitted to own guns, so Joseph's gun was illegal.

Agnes Kukuchka Smith (aka Rosie the Riveter) told me these stories on a bright November morning in 2012, years after the Pearl Harbor bombing brought the United States into the war. In Nitro, West Virginia, I sat in Agnes's home and listened to her incredible stories. She told me Jacob and Rudolf were her maternal uncles. The kind farm woman was her distant cousin. Joseph was Jacob and Rudolf's brother-in-law. After the war, Jacob became an artist and a famous sculptor. The artistic gene runs through the family, for Agnes's home is filled with her own artwork. Jacob's paintings hang on her living room walls.

Agnes's parents were born in Poland. The heartrending stories her mother told her live on in the back room of Agnes's memories. In time, though, Agnes would be able to make her contributions to the victory over the enemy that brought such incredible suffering and death to her relatives, as well as to countless other innocent human beings.

As I sat in the living room of Doutain and Agnes Smith's home, Agnes shared stories of her life as a Rosie the Riveter. She said, "We were conscious of the importance of our work." She and others in the factory knew the piston rings they manufactured were used on engines of U.S. planes. The following is an excerpt of a letter the workers in the plant received:

> Please listen to me, men and women of American Hammered; a soldier who worked with you and still am—only in a different division—the Division of the U. S. Army Air Force. The only difference is in the uniform we are all wearing. Mine is khaki and yours is coveralls. We are all in the American Company. Victory can only come if we all work together. We need your rings and you need us to drop bombs on the enemy. But we cannot drop bombs without planes, and planes cannot fly without rings. That's your part of the war.

Agnes Kukuchka was born on April 10, 1924, in Pennsylvania. Now, at eighty-eight, she is the second youngest Rosie the Riveter still living. When she was only eighteen, she moved to Baltimore, Maryland, where she went to work for Koppers Company American Hammered Piston Division. Two years later, she married Ernest Doutain Smith, a native West Virginian. One of the women with whom Agnes worked was Doutain's cousin, so the three of them often went out together in the evenings. One time, she said, they went to hear the Andrews Sisters, a popular trio in the 1940s.

Agnes said, "At Koppers, we made chromium-plated piston rings, which doubled the life of engines. Some were so small they could fit on your little finger, and some were large enough to drive a car through. When men were called to serve in the war, we women stepped up and did their jobs."

One man had been teaching her how to drive an overhead crane and an electric truck with a boom. She said the crane was used to drop piston rings down in the arbors. After the man who trained her was called to service, Agnes's supervisor came to her, pulled a badge out of his shirt pocket, and handed it to her. He said, "Here, Agnes. Here's your license." She, therefore, became the first woman to be licensed as a crane and truck operator.

Describing the factory, Agnes said, "The building covered two blocks, and inside, there was no air conditioning. Despite large fans, it was hot. There were salt tablets, which we took regularly. We had a cafeteria and an infirmary. Acid and water were used to chromium-plate the piston rings, and after working there for three years, the acid got into my system. I became quite ill."

In 1988, Agnes went to Auschwitz, where several of her relatives had been killed. She said at the airport she photographed a large sign reading, "Welcome to Krakow." A Communist officer took her to an office and confiscated her camera. He ripped out the film and returned the empty camera. She did not know it was illegal to photograph anything at the airport.

Later, at Auschwitz, she saw a roomful of hair where the prisoners' heads had been shaved and the "showers" where poison gas killed men, women, children, and babies. The room that haunted her most was the room holding empty baby shoes.

Freedom is fragile. ❖

Dolly Withrow is a retired English professor and the author of four books.

An Investment in Iron

Fred Sauceman

Lodge skillets on the trek to seasoning. Photo by author.

Jerry Don and Carol King own about a dozen cast iron skillets. In their home, in the Sweden's Cove section of Marion County, Tennessee, skillets sit on the bar all the time, for decoration. More than that, though, they symbolize family tradition.

Jerry Don is one of 220 employees who make cast iron skillets and an array of accompanying products at Lodge Manufacturing in South Pittsburg, Tennessee. Jerry Don's grandfather, John King, started working at Lodge in the 1930s. Jerry Don's father, Albert, worked there. Three of Jerry Don's uncles worked there. Jerry Don's brother worked there.

Lodge itself is a family business, now in the hands of the fourth generation of Lodges and Kellermanns. Dating to 1896, it is the oldest family-owned cookware company in America.

Jerry Don King took a job at Lodge immediately after graduating from South Pittsburg High School, and he has spent his entire working life with the company, nearly forty years. His title now is Utility Mechanic, meaning he has to know virtually every phase of the complex operation. He started out in the packing room, putting labels on skillets.

Jerry Don says the company owners told him that if he planned to stay on at Lodge, he should learn about everything in the plant, a little at a time. He took the advice.

"I picked up welding when I got a chance," he says. "The same with the cutting torch. I've gone from packing to finishing to the foundry."

Working at Lodge means constant learning. While the iconic cast iron skillet remains the centerpiece of the business, the product line has expanded to some 120 items. About thirty years ago, Lodge started making woks, for example. Seasoned steel pans and skillets were recently added. The fifteen-inch seasoned skillet resembles a Spanish paella pan. Within the last few

Jerry Don King. Photo by author.

years, grill pans have become quite popular. "People like grill marks on their food," says Mark Kelly, PR and Advertising Manager for Lodge.

A former newspaper and magazine editor, Mark has been a cast iron fan all his life. His grandparents' Dutch oven, given to them as a wedding present in 1918, is still in use. (It's not the only relic Mark inherited from them, by the way. As a mortician's apprentice, Mark's grandfather, Robert Hoge, was one of the people who embalmed William Jennings Bryan after the Scopes Trial in Dayton, Tennessee. Mark says the rear handle of Bryan's casket fell off, and his grandfather kept it. Mark, who appreciates a good Southern gothic story, keeps the handle in a drawer at home.)

Lodge Manufacturing was started by an Englishman, Joseph Lodge, who walked from Chattanooga to South Pittsburg, some thirty miles, in search of a place to locate a foundry.

"Joseph Lodge always said there are a thousand ways to make cast iron wrong and only one way to do it right," says Mark, who describes what takes place in the foundry as "Middle Ages technology," automated. From the pouring of the molten metal to the packing of the product, the entire process now takes about ninety minutes, and the foundry's capacity ranges from 800 to 1,600 pieces per hour.

Like most every industry, the making of cast iron has its own language. Buckets are bulls. Each pour of molten metal is a charge. A key to the whole process, though, is simply sand. "It's ancient technology," Mark says.

Sand can withstand the intense heat of the liquid iron, which is poured into molds at temperatures between 2,480 and 2,520 degrees. Vibrating, cleaning, tumbling, and blasting with fine steel shot remove any excess sand. The sand itself and the steel shot are all recycled. Scrap steel and cast iron are recycled as well.

"We recycle virtually everything," Mark says. "Foundries have always been sustainable. We use that sand over and over, and then it goes to line landfills, ponds, and into mortar for bricks."

In 2011, Lodge recycled seventy-eight tons of cardboard, 399 tons of metal scrap, and 960 gallons of seasoning oil. The company started seasoning its products in 2002, and by 2007, all Lodge products were leaving the foundry in seasoned form.

Mark Kelly compares the seasoning to what goes on in a car wash. Vegetable oil is sprayed onto both sides of the products with electrostatic spray guns. The chemistry is simple: The positively-charged oil atoms bond with the negatively-charged iron atoms. The familiar black patina results when the products are then baked in a high-temperature oven.

Each generation, it seems, is rediscovering the benefits of cast iron cookware, which only gets better with age. "Doctors say if you have anemia, cook with cast iron," says Mark. "It's such a simple thing."

Demand for ten-inch and twelve-inch skillets increases annually.

"Every year, Amazon does projections on sales at the holidays. During the 2012 holiday season, Lodge represented five of the top

A Middle Ages technology. Photo by author.

ten-selling cookware items," says Mark. Some 3,000 dealers carry Lodge products, and that's counting Wal-Mart as one dealer. "High-end" stores like Sur la Table and Williams-Sonoma now do a brisk business in Lodge's American-made cast iron.

Lodge runs several outlet stores, including one adjacent to the foundry. It's a favorite stop for visitors to the National Cornbread Festival, held in downtown South Pittsburg every April. Lodge and Martha White Flour are the original sponsors of the event.

"The downtown area was dying," says Mark. "The bypass took the traffic away. The festival was a way to reinvigorate the city."

While cast iron cookware is evolving, with additions such as enamel coating in various colors, Lodge has achieved a perfect balance between keeping up with trends in technology and tastes and yet staying true to the old methods.

"We make a number-one quality product," says Jerry Don King. "That's what has gotten people's attention over the years. When you buy cast iron cookware, you're buying a partner for life, something you can pass down to your children. It's one of the smartest investments a person can make." ❖

Tomato Gravy

Drippings from 2 cooked bacon slices
2 large ripe tomatoes, finely chopped
1 large Vidalia onion, chopped
Dash of Tabasco sauce
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
¼ cup all-purpose flour
1 cup leftover coffee

Heat bacon drippings in a well-seasoned 12-inch cast iron skillet over medium-high heat. Add the tomatoes and onion, stirring until the onion is softened, about 5 minutes. Add the Tabasco, salt, and pepper. Add the flour and cook, stirring constantly, until the mixture thickens. Gradually add the coffee and bring the mixture to a boil, stirring constantly. Reduce the heat to medium-low and cook until thickened, about 5 minutes, stirring constantly. Serve over biscuits.

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Fred Sauceman is the author of the three-volume book series *The Place Setting: Timeless Tastes of the Mountain South—From Bright Hope to Frog Level*, published by Mercer University Press in Macon, Georgia.

The Apple Cider Industry in Appalachia

Joel F. Keebler

Photo courtesy Charlie Warden.

Cider is one of those words that means different things to different people. For colonial Americans and the early settlers of Appalachia, it meant only one thing: hard apple cider. And from colonial times until about the mid-nineteenth century, it was the most popular beverage in North America. Hard cider is fermented, generally containing between five and seven percent alcohol. A more potent cider can be made by adding sugar, which pushes the fermentation on to the dry side. In Britain it was called "scrumpy" and in France "champagne cider."

After a long hiatus, hard cider is showing up on shelves and tables all across the country, becoming the fastest-growing segment of the beverage business. Workaday six-packs in the grocery store are offered by large producers like Woodchuck of Middlebury, Vermont. Woodchuck is the top-selling hard cider in the country, and the company produces several apple-based flavors year-round and a sizable collection of limited releases that come and go seasonally. These include "peary," made from pears, and the "world's first" pumpkin cider, introduced in 2010.

One reason for the resurgence seems to be that unlike beer, hard ciders are naturally gluten-free. As of 2012, almost thirty percent of Americans claim that they would like to cut back or avoid gluten. For about one percent of Americans, it's because of celiac disease, but for lots of others, it's simply because they have difficulty digesting gluten.

Cider was once the everyday drink of America, served by George Washington to distinguished guests at Mount Vernon and made and consumed by the poor of Appalachia. John Adams attributed his health and long life to a tankard of cider before breakfast. At Monticello, Thomas Jefferson devoted an entire apple orchard exclusively to cider making. His "North Orchard" was his best orchard, and it was here that he grew about 250 of two varieties, Hewes Crab and Taliaferro, both considered prime cider apples. Apples grew well in central Virginia, and in the more mountainous sections of the western end of the state and in western North Carolina, important industry evolved surrounding orcharding and post-harvest processing. The eighteenth century desire for cider caused many people of all ranks to

cultivate apples. It was said that "every plantation owner made cider, drank cider, and bragged about his cider." Others used cider for barter, and it was sometimes accepted as payment by doctors, lawyers, and ministers.

In the 1820s, there were efforts made by American cider proponents to officially recognize cider as the "national beverage." It is easy to see why cider became so popular in much of America and Appalachia. For one, apples could be grown rather casually. Seeds could be obtained for little or nothing, and often, orchards were pruned and worked only annually, if at all. A hardy apple tree can grow neglected, crooked, and bent and still produce a sizable crop. And an industrious orchardist could produce a lot of cider from those apples. It is estimated that 200 Hewes Crab trees can produce nearly 5,000 gallons of cider annually. Also, hard cider-making can be very technical and equipment-intensive, or it can be accomplished casually by a small producer working at home with some buckets or casks and a small mess of apples. It's not unusual for hobbyists to report cider perking just hours after processing. A known starter yeast might yield more consistent results, but wild strains of yeast that cause fermentation can sometimes be present on apples while they hang on the tree.

The past popularity of hard cider only deepened the unexpectedness of its decline. Sometime after the Civil War, and long before the Eighteenth Amendment established Prohibition, cider all but disappeared from the tables of Americans. Evidence suggests that early cider production was very local and limited to small farms, while beer production was commercialized on a large scale as German immigrants set up sophisticated breweries and were able to sell a more affordable libation. Influenced by the Temperance movement, many Americans gave up their drinking, and some even went so far as to cut down their apple trees. After the repeal of Prohibition in 1933, beer staged a remarkable comeback, but cider never did.

By 1930, Southerners had selected and named about 1,400 apple varieties. And in the U.S., over 10,000 unique apple types were once known. These days, most grocery stores carry only a few varieties, with just fifteen of them accounting for about ninety percent of U.S. production. Sadly, today there are many more choices of toothpastes than varieties of apples. Even so, the average American eats about sixteen pounds of fresh apples per year, making them our second most popular fruit. We also consume a lot of apple juice and cider, sweet and hard. In 2010, we drank about 700 million gallons. Of that total, 587 million gallons were imported.

In recent years there has been a marked resurgence in growing heirloom apple varieties. A small but dedicated band of nurserymen has been working to rediscover, collect, and propagate Southern varieties. Today, about 300 of the best Southern apples are available.

The only apples originally growing in the New World were wild crab apples. Some of these might have tasted good, but the fruit would have been exceedingly small. Botanically, a crab apple is just like a regular apple, only the fruit is smaller: A diameter less than two inches is a crab apple. Native Americans were known to have cultivated a few scattered orchards of crab apples, cherries, and plums. Crabs and most other apples are usually cross-fertile, and they freely hybridize, making them ideal for evolving into a myriad of different types or cultivars (cultivated varieties). At one time in Appalachia, all apple seeds were valued and planted. Most of the time, the trees that germinated from them were of limited value. But on occasion, a new type would be noted, producing a fruit with exceptional or unique flavor or a type that kept well. Grafting—splicing a small branch of the desired parent to a separate root—is the only reliable method of propagating trees with desirable fruit and getting an exact duplicate.

Initially, many American planters were satisfied that a seedling from a known source would make an apple near enough to the parent to be good enough. And indeed, many seedlings proved to be better suited to the hotter American climate than some of the grafted types brought from Europe. This idea is what opened the American frontier to the greatest of the applemen, John Chapman. Chapman, better known as Johnny Appleseed, did not bother with the grafting of apple trees as he marched through the Ohio River Valley preaching his eccentric gospel of apples, non-violence, and Swedenborgianism. His success with apples was religion-based: Wine was long associated with Catholicism, while hard apple cider came to be viewed as the official hard drink of American Protestants.

It seems entirely fitting that Thomas Jefferson, an early advocate of North American flora, viewed the apple as quintessentially American: diverse and complex, the end result of an import stewing in the great melting pot of a vast continent. It has been said that the apple is to the U.S. as the potato to Ireland and the olive to Italy. In Appalachia, the resurgence in cider-making is very artisanal, and the end product is

decidedly upscale. Like Jefferson at Monticello, the modern cider makers of Appalachia are favoring a more champagne-like beverage, designed for pairing and to complement fine eating.

There is an apple-growing belt that runs north and south straight through the heart of central Appalachia. The belt extends from northern Georgia and on into eastern Pennsylvania via the Allegheny Mountains. It passes through the mountains on either side of the Tennessee/North Carolina line, up into Virginia and along the Blue Ridge.

One of the choice apples for cider is a small one called Hewes Crab. We don't know for sure, but speculation suggests that Hewes Crab is a cross between a native U.S. crab and a European type. Thomas Jefferson grew Hewes Crab in his Monticello orchard, and it is still favored by modern-day ciderists like Diane Flynt of Foggy Ridge Cider in Dugspur, Virginia. Flynt and a handful of other craft cider makers are helping to lead a renaissance of hard cider appreciation. She was able to take scion wood directly from Hewes Crabs growing at Monticello for planting in her orchard in Floyd County. She has more than 1,000 trees growing in the hills near the Blue Ridge Parkway. Flynt grows more than thirty apple varieties and knows their flavors intimately, using them in complex blends to create high-end cider. Foggy Ridge is a juxtaposition of old and new: Vintage heirloom apples are processed using the most modern equipment. (Flynt favors stainless steel for her fermenting tanks and a modern-day pressure tank adds carbon dioxide to her ciders, giving them the bubbles.) Foggy Ridge offers three ciders that are more like fine champagnes than everyday beverages and a unique cider and apple brandy blend that is a sweet aperitif or dessert cider.

Another Appalachia-based cider producer is the McRitchie Winery and Ciderworks in Thurmond, North Carolina. Producing wine since 2006, the company now uses apples from the Brushy Mountains of Wilkes County and produces hard cider similar to that traditionally found in the Brittany region of northern France. McRitchie calls it a "sharp, dry, brilliantly clear sparkling beverage."

Albemarle CiderWorks in North Garden, Virginia, has been in production since 2008, making cider from heritage apple varieties. Current core production includes four varietals: Jupiter's Legacy, Old Virginia Winesap, Royal Pippin, and Ragged Mountain. Two new varieties introduced for spring 2013 are Red Hill and Pomme Mary.

Nearby is Castle Hill Cider in Keswick, Virginia, crafting four different ciders, each bottled like wine and retailing between seventeen and twenty-three dollars. Castle Hill uses two very different methods of fermentation. One employs large tanks or vats and is very traditional, being "tried and true." The other is an "extreme craft approach," influenced by Old World techniques. Large terra cotta vessels called kvevri are "planted" below ground where fermentation can occur slowly at cool and very stable temperatures.

Another cider maker in the Charlottesville area is Potter's Craft Cider. The specialty beverage is "a revival of authentic American farmhouse cider," made using traditional cider apples like Virginia Winesap and Albemarle Pippin. Apples are sourced from local, family-run orchards in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

Bold Rock Hard Cider in Nellysford, Virginia, is the result of a unique collaboration between native Virginian John Washburn and Brian Shanks, an award-winning cider maker from New Zealand who consults for cider producers internationally. His advice is especially sought out when it comes to adapting technology and specialized techniques to cider making. Washburn convinced Shanks to come to Virginia to help him create Bold Rock. They bottle two of their products in twelve-ounce bottles, making them at least look like work-a-day beverages. One is called Virginia Draft and the other Virginia Apple. They both contain 4.7 percent alcohol. Bold Rock also produces a higher-end product called Crimson Ridge. It is 6.9 percent and bottled in 750-milliliter bottles.

Long after Appalachia and much of the New World were seeded with apples from the Old, we have come back to the idea and pleasures of drinking cider, turning back to the apple varieties that were created, propagated, and revered by orchardists and cider makers known and unknown. It seems only fitting that a long-cultivated fruit grows so well among some of the oldest mountains in the world. Thomas Jefferson and John Chapman might wonder why we ever strayed. ❖

Joel F. Keebler is Professor of Horticulture at Virginia Highlands Community College in Abingdon.

Mason Jar

Gretchen McCroskey

Once protector against barren
winter. sweet nectar for parched
lips, meat for the hungry,
in an age of Styrofoam cartons
and plastic containers, I have
evolved, moving from pine boards
in cellars to granite sideboards,
grand hallways and living room
mantles—wherever my bubbled
green retracts light
and admiration.

I may showcase gardens'
finest flowers, perfume air
with lavender or line shelves
in Garvey's Antique Mall;
but I seldom serve
as I once did, spilling
life-giving nourishment
from harvest's bounty.

Gretchen McCroskey's poetry has been published in a number of journals, and her chapbook *Finding My Way Home* was published by Finishing Line Press in 2009. She lives in Bristol, Virginia.

Independence Day

Michael Chitwood

Photo courtesy Charlie Warden.

The week of July 4 was the week of the summer in the small town where I grew up. The furniture factory and the textile mill shut down for that holiday, the only time of the year when they actually turned off the machines and closed the doors. Not even Christmas got this treatment.

For the mill hands and factory workers, it was a week of crankbait and NASCAR, a week of camping at the lake getting sunburnt and mosquito bit and just generally having a grand time. For some it was a week of gardening, weeding, carpeting bean rows with grass clippings, and getting started on the canning of some of the early crops. It was a week when the usual rules were suspended and other possibilities could be considered, even experimented with. More than one shade-tree entrepreneur got big ideas during this down time.

But for me during my college years, this week was a week of work, and the job I did was strange and lonely and, well, a little frightening.

Because the textile mill went dormant for this brief stretch, it was the only time when the huge cooling fans that regulated the mill's atmosphere year-round could be serviced. We are talking fans the size of ocean liner propellers here. They were mounted inside steel tunnels, and I had to crawl in and scrape away a year's worth of rust and then paint the fans.

This was a good job in one sense: the pay. Because I was working during a vacation week, I received time and a half and on the Fourth itself I received double time. I worked two days in one on Independence Day.

But the eight-hour days seemed like sixteen hours when you spoke to no one, saw no one, and realized that you were becoming covered with the blister-chips of rust that leapt from the scraper. More than once I lurched and grabbed at the sides of the tunnel when I thought that far-away I heard the thrum of the electric power coming back on. Perched on the blades of those fans, I often entered a surreal space in which I wondered what life I was actually living. Was going to college depriving me of other opportunities? Should I hit the road, see the country, find out what's really out there? Should I hole up here, in this small town, and try to plumb the depths of my soul? I guess I went a little stir crazy.

At the end of the week, the other workers came back with blistered foreheads and backs. Four or five of the women, though no one knew it yet, were pregnant. New lives had begun.

Then those big blades began to whir as the mill again awakened and all the other possible lives I had imagined slowly drifted off as though passengers on a ship. Every choice is an opportunity and a missed opportunity. It's called independence. ❖

Michael Chitwood's work has appeared in *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The New Republic*, *Threepenny Review*, *The Virginia Quarterly Review*, *Field*, and numerous other journals. He teaches at the University of North Carolina—Chapel Hill.

Everyone Has a Piece of Appalachia, Thanks to Etsy

Rebecca Tolley-Stokes

Etsy store owners Emily and Brad Weckesser. Photo courtesy the Weckessers.

Angelica Miller says the recession never affected her jewelry-making business, Artistic Icing, which she operates from her home in Unicoi, Tennessee, because " . . . my price point is good. I don't use precious metals or anything like that."

Miller is one of many artists and handcrafters who make a living, or supplement their income, by selling their work at regional festivals as well as through online marketplaces like Etsy (etsy.com). Etsy was conceived by Rob Kalin in 2005. People selling handmade items open online stores and connect with buyers through the website, which offers a low-investment, turnkey alternative to a bricks-and-mortar presence on Main Street or even a modest investment on the festival circuit.

Indiana native Emily Weckesser launched The Oyster's Pearl in Fayetteville, West Virginia, in January 2012. Weckesser creates invitations, stationery, screen prints, and other custom printables at home, taking advantage of "the thriving online marketplace." Emily says, "My location in Appalachia has allowed me to introduce Etsy and online selling to others, as it isn't as well-known around here."

Emily's spouse, Brad Weckesser, runs an Etsy storefront as well. Richwood Creations sells rustic and customizable wall-hangings, rolling pins, trays, cutting boards, and other items made from reclaimed lumber. Proceeds from these goods help support Young Life. As Brad explains, "E-commerce is becoming larger and more popular around the world, and seeing the interest coming in from random countries helps us analyze stats and adjust some of our marketing for our target audiences. Being more and more aware that we are not just reaching folks here in the U.S. but around the world helps to keep us mindful that we can't be narrow in our appeal for all our products."

Craftwork in the region has always been tied to Appalachia's changing culture and the economies reflected by local tastes and materials. The advent of e-commerce and the globalization of market demands have a push-pull effect on Appalachian artists and handcrafters. It

is a chicken-egg question. Does the market influence the artist, or does the artist influence the market? In an online marketplace such as Etsy, sometimes it can be both.

"I started my business right in the middle of the recession," Breanne Holden answered when asked about her eponymous Etsy storefront which she operates from her home in Morgantown, West Virginia. Her large-scale, expensive fine-art prints of birds, mermaids, fish, and other animals received many views and favorites, but "I found that most buyers were hesitant to take such an expensive risk, especially from a new seller with no feedback or previous sales. So I decided to try selling high-quality prints of the original paintings for a fraction of the cost, and immediately I started to get buyers."

She quickly found customers worldwide. Though she sells original paintings, prints, cards, and other items in gift shops and galleries and she occasionally sets up at a trade show or festival, the Etsy storefront is her primary focus.

Like Holden, Milly Tunnell started her business, Second Spring Soaps of Johnson City, Tennessee, mid-recession and credits it as a driving force for her return to college at East Tennessee State University.

"I took a huge gamble with it, and it has really paid off. Because of the uncertainty in the economy, I've been reluctant to take the big leap of an official storefront or make any other big purchases."

Tunnell speaks of the networking benefits she gained from her Etsy experience. "I loved the feel of the site and the tight-knit community that the crafters and artisans have created on there. I've met some of my best friends on Etsy, and I've been able to be a part of a great local network of ladies who have helped me jump into the world of craft shows."

Selling online helped her learn soapmaking traditions from other cultures and expanded her network of colleagues she could use as sounding boards for new products. As an Appalachian Studies minor at ETSU, Tunnell has an awareness of the regional sense of place and connection to the land that natives experience, and she finds "inspiration for colors and patterns in the mountains and in nature." She named one of her popular scents—a blend of patchouli, bergamot, and cinnamon—"Appalachian Fall."

Appalachian art and handicraft are often characterized by a tradition

"Appalachian Fall" scented soaps. Photo courtesy Second Spring Soaps.

of storytelling, and Angelica Miller's pieces have stories behind them. Her grandfather was a carpenter, and she has stacks of foldout rulers he left behind that she transforms into charms. Many of her customers bring pieces of silverware to her to bend and contort into rings or bracelets or other types of adornment.

"At Christmas a woman brought old Appalachian tatting she had, some that was her grandmother's, and I cut some pieces and put them in a soldered pendant. Those were really neat. And it gave me another idea. My grandmother had a favorite scarf, and I had an idea to use that. It's in a box just sitting there, and at some point it will be gone and when we're gone it will be in a yard sale. So why not make something like a necklace out of it that everyone can have a piece of?" ❖

Rebecca Tolley-Stokes teaches at ETSU. Her writing has appeared in *Smoky Mountain Living*, *Gastronomica*, *Food & Foodways*, *The Johnson City Press*, and *The Erwin Record*.

Bedspread Alley

Judy Lee Green

Photo courtesy Georgia Department of Economic Development.

Chenille bedspreads were sold along the Dixie Highway from the Tennessee line to Atlanta, Georgia, when I was a little girl. Clotheslines stretched across dusty parking lots in front of car dealerships, produce stands, filling stations, and souvenir shops.

These beautiful bedspreads were available in bright colors or soft pastels, in solids, geometrics, or floral and border designs. The peacock bedspread, however, was the most popular. Twin peacocks, back to back or side by side, were centered with their flashy tail feathers covering the entire bedspread.

Chenille bedspreads became popular with tourists going to Florida through the South on the Dixie Highway in the 1940s and '50s. That stretch of highway became known far and wide as Bedspread Alley or Peacock Alley. Motorists on their way to Miami bought inexpensively-priced bedspreads to take back to Michigan, Minnesota, and other Midwestern states.

My family often made trips to visit my granddaddy, Omer Bingham, along this same highway. We left early on a Saturday or Sunday morning. Roads were poor, and it was not uncommon to have car trouble or a flat tire. Highway 41 narrowed when we crossed the Tennessee line into Georgia. To pass the time, we kids counted peacock bedspreads and watched for Burma-Shave signs.

Highway 41 was a two-lane blacktop to Ringgold. Between Ringgold and Varnell, the road was dirt. It narrowed and people had to pull halfway off the road in order to pass. If the shoulder was soft, it was not unusual to get stuck. If it had rained recently, we either had to take a longer route or ford two creeks where there were no bridges. Of course, we kids begged Daddy to take the shorter route and drive through the creeks. We often detoured through a farmer's barnyard, Daddy blowing the horn to scare chickens out of the way. When we became stuck in a swollen creek, a farmer in overalls and dingy long-handles hitched up his mules and pulled us out.

The Dixie Highway began in Michigan at the Canadian border and made its way south to Miami, Florida. Though completed in 1927 as a direct route for commerce from the Midwest, it became increasingly popular after World War II when Americans took to the open highways in their low-priced, American-made automobiles.

Through the South, the Dixie Highway was rural and sparsely populated. Families on long trips became known as Tin Can Tourists because there were few accommodations along the way. There were hardly any hotels, motels, restaurants, welcome centers, or rest stops. My mama always carried potted meat and soda crackers, Vienna sausages, pork and beans, and other non-perishable food with us whenever we left home—much of it in tin cans.

When I was a little, my family and I saw the same sights along the road as tourists traveling to Florida. Cotton fields and crops of corn and wheat stretched for miles in red, hard-packed clay. Bedspreads were strung along the roadside in all kinds of weather, fading in the hot Georgia sun and waltzing in the wind and the rain. Clotheslines hung outside small grocery stores, real estate offices, produce stands, and beauty shops.

Souvenir shops offered chenille bedspreads,"Co-Colas," MoonPies, and peanut butter crackers. They sold overpriced trinkets and often advertised a vicious caged bear or deadly rattlesnakes as free attractions. The bears were malnourished and lethargic. The coiled rattlesnakes

never moved, though we kids tapped their tanks.

Bedspreads in floral and border designs hung on clotheslines between porch posts of two- and three-room cabins of unpainted board and batten. They often had lean-tos on the back and a truck patch beside the house. Women, old beyond their years, hoed in faded housedresses, granny bonnets, and brogan shoes. Barefoot children—girls in flour sack dresses, boys in overalls—played in the dust and leapfrogged off the porches of the houses that perched on rock piers with no foundations. Lazy mongrel dogs yawned in the dirt underneath the houses or chased passing cars, barking and snarling.

Beautiful peacock bedspreads in bright, showy colors were strung in front of tar-papered shacks with wringer washing machines and worn-out Naugahyde sofas on the front porches. Young girls carried babies on their hips, and kids swept the yards with homemade brooms, stirring up dust like a windstorm. We leaned out of the car windows and watched the kids until they were out of sight. We were aware they were different yet somehow the same.

Daddy slowed as we drove into the little town of Varnell. There were several buildings including a tiny post office painted white with an American flag flying out front, a white clapboard church with a steeple, and a schoolhouse with a creek nearby. Old houses, either large and rambling or poor but humble, had rose bushes, hollyhocks, and other gorgeous flowers blooming in the yards. Old people, fanning on the porches, waved as we passed.

The Southern Railway ran through town, and when my mama was a little girl, there had been a depot. Section houses for the track gang lined the track. A country store with a Merita Bread advertisement on the center section of the wooden screen door was run by a one-armed man. He sat on a backless bench out front and waved to passers-by when he had no customers. I was scared of the arm that he didn't have.

My granddaddy and my great aunt and uncle lived between Dalton, Georgia, and Cleveland, Tennessee. They were sharecroppers. They lived in a tenant house, a turn-of-the-century frame farmhouse with a tin roof and shed porch extending across the front. Interior twin chimneys supported four fireplaces. It stood on crumbling rock piers.

Granddaddy's house had a wide central dogtrot that ran from the front to back. A small enclosed porch on the rear held firewood, a bucket bench, and the slop bucket. All leftovers went in the slop bucket to feed the hogs. A bare light bulb hung from the ceiling in each room. There was no running water. A pump stood on the side of the house. A path from the back door led to the outhouse, past the chicken coop. Simple, basic, chenille bedspreads, which my mama called counterpanes, covered the iron beds at my granddaddy's house.

Chenille bedspreads were cotton sheeting with raised tufts of thick yarn. Similar to candle-wicking, a handcraft technique from the late 1700s, the method was revived by Catherine Evans Whitener in the late 1800s. The cottage industry eventually employed 10,000 farm women during the Great Depression.

Spread houses were established where patterns were stamped on white sheets. Haulers then delivered the stamped sheets and the yarn to thousands of rural women in the Appalachian South who were known as tufters. They filled in the pattern on the sheets with the yarn provided. Haulers returned, paid the women, and took the bedspreads back to the spread houses where they were dyed and washed in hot water to shrink the fabric and lock the yarn in place.

My grandmother, Rebecca Palmer Bingham, tufted bedspreads in the sharecropper's cabin where she lived with her family in the 1920s and '30s. She was paid seven cents a spread. My mama remembered, as a little girl, sitting on a puddled bedspread at her mother's feet and tracing the designs with her finger as her mother tufted in a ladder-back chair.

After washing and dying, chenille bedspreads were hung outside to dry and fluff. They attracted the attention of tourists as they traveled Highway 41 through northwest Georgia in the 1930s, and an industry was born. Soon these colorful bedspreads began appearing in expensive New York City department stores, increasing and expanding their popularity. Chenille work helped the South survive the depression and created an industry that made Dalton, Georgia, the bedspread capital of the world well into the 1970s.

Chenille robes, bath mats, and small rugs were made. Small rugs gave way to large room-sized rugs and the carpet industry was born. Today, Dalton, Georgia, is the carpet capital of the world, and Catherine Evans Whitener is known as the mother of the carpet industry. Chenille bedspreads made many people wealthy and played a major role in the economy of north Georgia.

I traveled Bedspread Alley numerous times during my childhood and for many years thereafter. I am proud that my grandmother played a small role in the history of the highway and in the growth of a Southern textile industry that was pioneered by a woman and employed thousands of her Appalachian sisters. ❖

Judy Lee Green is a longtime writer and speaker and a frequent contributor to *Now & Then*.

The Tomato Route

Anna Duggins Roberts

Disinclined to labor, the author (standing) and her sister Patricia, circa 1964. Photos courtesy author.

Daddy thought I had a few character flaws that needed fixing. At twelve, I spent too much time indoors and clung too tightly to my mama. I was way too bashful, especially around grown-ups. And I was lazy. Daddy devised the tomato route to remedy all three.

"I've got a project for you this summer, Anna Laura," Daddy said one morning at breakfast. Right away I knew I was in trouble, as Daddy only used both names when he really meant business.

"You're going to have a tomato route," he announced.

"What's a tomato route?"

"You're going to plant and raise tomatoes, pick them, and then deliver them once a week during the season to ladies in town. I've already advertised for you in the *Greeneville Daily Sun*, and you have six ladies signed up for a dozen juicy, ripe tomatoes each week."

"No, thank you," I said. "I don't want to."

"Not an option, Anna Laura," Daddy replied. I was roused from sleep at daybreak the following morning to go to the garden.

Daddy grew up hungry in a large family during the Great Depression, so to feed our family of five, he planted a garden every year big enough to supply all of Greene County, Tennessee. Apple, peach, pear, plum, pecan, and chestnut trees, along with strawberry plants and blackberry and raspberry vines, supplemented the vegetables from the garden. My mama spent all summer freezing and canning the produce, and we feasted on the bounty during the long, gray winter. All the gardening was done very early in the morning, or late in the evening, as Daddy spent 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. each day at his store in town.

I pulled on my shorts and shirt and followed, barefoot, through the dew-covered grass. Pungent, black soil in the garden was tilled and ready for planting. Our farm bordered the Nolichucky River, and this year's garden plot sat atop a site that was once an Indian village. Each time the ground was turned on that part of the farm, we uncovered arrowheads and other Indian tools.

I knew what was expected of me. I knew already the work ethic Daddy exacted, as the first thing I was ever

asked to memorize, other than the bedtime prayer taught by my mama, was Daddy's favorite verse from *The McGuffey Reader*: "If a task is once begun, never leave it 'til it's done. Be the labor great or small, do it well or not at all."

Daddy embodied that philosophy. Financially independent since the eighth grade, he saved all his pay during World War II and used his GI benefits to earn a business degree and establish his own radio/television store. Though he employed several technicians, and Mama helped with the bookkeeping and billing, Daddy didn't hesitate to tackle any task at the store.

From procuring inventory, to selling product, to cleaning the restroom, to cultivating climbing roses on the front corner of the building, he did it all. My favorite was when Daddy went on service calls, taking me along for the ride. I became familiar with all the little communities and back roads of Greene County, and the nice ladies whose homes we visited almost always served me delicious, home-baked treats while Daddy repaired their televisions.

John Duggins in 1964.

So I modeled Daddy's example and planted, staked, hoed, pulled weeds, carried water, and picked off beetles. Daddy worked alongside, showing me exactly what to do. As the tomatoes grew, I grew: taller, stronger, tanner, wiser. Soon the tomatoes were ripe and ready to deliver.

Daddy spread six baskets in the grass under the shade tree. We loaded a wheelbarrow with the first of the harvest. Then Daddy instructed me to fill each basket with twelve tomatoes, carefully sorting out the roundest, ripest fruits to place off to one side on a feed sack spread under the tree. When the baskets were filled, Daddy told me to add two of those prize tomatoes on top of each.

"Why, Daddy?" I asked. "We only promised them a dozen. Don't you want me to carry these perfect tomatoes to the house for Mama?"

"Always give good measure, Anna Laura," he replied.

My students today consider me too rigorous and demanding, though they usually admit that I am fair. They tell me that I'm a perfectionist and that my expectations are too high. They come to my office complaining when their "B" or "C" papers don't receive an "A."

That's because they didn't have a daddy like mine. Or a tomato route. ❖

Anna Duggins Roberts is Professor of Merchandising in the Department of Management and Marketing at East Tennessee State University. Her father was John W. Duggins, well-known businessman and owner of Duggins Television in Greeneville, Tennessee.

Landscapes, Near the End

Richard Hague

The huge gob pile
along Weirton's Harmon Creek,
a few straggling clumps of broom sage
bearding its blackened sides,

the fresh roadcut for WV Route 2 along the river
blasting away the green hillsides I'd seen
since a kid from Steubenville,

Tarry oil stains on river stones
round as poisoned biscuits
at the foot of Market Street,

New wells
scabbing the river bottoms
and bulldozed terraces
where once skylarks
shot into the air
in song, and tumbled,
yellowgold
against the azure
of the sky,
madonnas
a-wing, sweet-
throated.

Richard Hague's latest books are *During The Recent Extinctions: New & Selected Poems 1984-2012* (Dos Madres Press) and *Learning How: Stories, Tales & Yarns* (Bottom Dog Press).

Lumbering the East Tennessee Coves

Lori Tucker-Sullivan

These women and children are standing next to one of the houses that was moved around the mountain. Photo courtesy author.

In the early 1900s, lumbermen culled enormous and vast virgin timber from the mountainsides along the Tellico River in East Tennessee. Snuggled into the foothills of the Smoky Mountains, Tellico Plains had an unusual amount and variety of industry in the early 1900s, with the lumber industry being the most prolific. My grandparents, Louise and Willis Tucker, natives of Tellico Plains, both worked for the lumber companies during this time. A record of their work exists in tape recordings the two made while recounting their experience for Vic Weal, a reporter for the *Knoxville Journal*. Weal conducted his interviews just weeks before my grandfather's death in November 1979.

My grandfather began his logging career as a teenager, working at the Heyser Lumber Company's sawmill operation where he planed timbers into building lumber. The huge logs reached the sawmill after being skidded down the mountain by a team of oxen, or pushed along the river using a series of dams. Later, he worked for Tellico Extract Company, which obtained tannic acid from chestnut and hemlock. He ran wood and bark through large chippers, then delivered the resulting mulch to coal-fired boilers where it was steeped to leach the tannins.

Once old enough, my grandfather ventured into the woods where he worked as a camp foreman, first for the Tellico River Lumber Company and then, starting around 1910, for its successor, the Babcock Lumber Company. The Babcock brothers came from Pittsburgh, where they had begun their business in the Allegheny Forest. They established lumber cutting in Georgia and Virginia as well as Tennessee.

Babcock workers lived in the areas of the forest where they felled trees, forming camps that bustled like cities at the height of the logging jobs. Some were large enough to include a church, post office, and schoolhouse. They were located in the coves that were naturally created when smaller tributaries flowed into the Tellico River. The coves sometimes got their names from the first men to settle them. Thus my grandfather worked on Kirkland Cove, named for Andrew Kirkland. He also worked on Woody and Slickrock coves. One of the last camps where my grandfather worked was Jeffrey's Hell, near the top of the mountain along the North Carolina line. That cove was named when Old Man Jeffrey, a trapper, came across the mountaintop with his best hunting dogs to hunt bear. When the dogs ran off and never returned, the old man

went in search, telling his hunting companions that if he didn't come back, he had gone to hell. The hunter never returned and the cove was named.

Shortly after arriving in Tellico Plains, Babcock purchased 43,000 acres of land in the watershed. The company also acquired twenty town lots and a large building which became the company store. My grandfather recalled purchasing a pair of work boots from the store at a cost of eighteen dollars, sometime around 1915. Altogether, Babcock built houses, a hotel, and expanded the former Heyser milling operations. Through the mountains, the company built shanty camps for workers and extended the railway, even building a large trestle bridge over Bald River Falls.

As the work increased, the camps grew. Loggers brought their wives and children to live in the shanties, which were constructed with large rings on top so they could be picked up by log loaders and hauled to the next camp as work progressed. Eventually, my grandparents labored their way from the base of the mountain to its peak, living and working in each cove until the timber was expended. Accessing and transporting the lumber became more difficult as the company worked its way deeper into the forest.

My grandfather explained that, in the late 1800s, logs were floated down the Tellico River using a series of "splash dams" that allowed the wood to be held in large quantities as it made its way downstream. But local farmers complained about the damage done by the release of water in waves large enough to move timber and the practice was outlawed. Thereafter, the company extended the railroad and loaded the timber onto train cars using a series of horse-drawn winches and pulleys. Logs were taken from deep within the forest by large draft horses which my grandfather referred to as Belgians.

"The last team of horses I drove, each one weighed a little over a ton," he said. A team of two horses brought the logs into a landing area called the "pull road," where they were loaded onto the train.

"The biggest log I brought out was poplar. There was nearly 5,000 board feet, just in that one log." He brought out plenty of logs that accounted for 2,000 to 3,000 board feet of lumber each.

The loggers worked in pairs, using ten-foot saws to fell the trees. Others serviced the operation: Some tended horses or cared for the long saw blades and other equipment; still others rigged the logs for pulling to the loading area or operated the pulleys. In total, a camp's crew usually numbered sixty. My grandmother prepared meals for the men who gathered together daily for breakfast. Single men, or those whose families didn't live at the camp, also ate supper in the cookhouse.

Each day, my grandmother rose at four o'clock in the morning to prepare 200 "cathead" biscuits, sausage, gravy, bacon, and eggs in the cookhouse at Kirkland Cove. She rolled dough and cut biscuits with a tin can as my grandfather got the fire going. While she cooked, my father, born in 1918, lay wrapped in a wool blanket on a table between two pillows. Once breakfast was complete and dishes washed, my grandmother and her helpers went to work on supper, which consisted of roast beef, stew or pork, cornbread, pinto beans, and potatoes.

"Those men was always polite," she said. Babcock prided itself on providing plenty of nourishing food for its workers and requiring good behavior in the cookhouse to prevent fist fights among the brawny men.

Each day, my grandmother rose at four o'clock in the morning to prepare 200 "cathead" biscuits, sausage, gravy, bacon, and eggs in the cookhouse at Kirkland Cove.

As my grandparents left camp on a Sunday afternoon in 1925 to visit family in town, my grandfather stopped to chat with one of his best friends, a man named Bill Graves.

"Bill was just about like my own blood kin," my grandfather recalled. "I would've done anything for him and him for me."

That day, they met at the coal siding where trains waited to move up or down the track depending on where they were needed. My grandfather asked Bill about a forest fire on the North Carolina side of the mountain. Several fires burned that summer as the area was in severe drought. After conferring, the men decided the fire was far enough away and being managed such that it didn't pose a problem to the Babcock camps. Bill sent my grandparents on their way.

That was the last time my grandfather saw his friend alive. As my grandparents left, they also noticed a repairman working on a locomotive engine. He had removed the screen at the top of the smokestack, which was meant to keep sparks contained

that could otherwise escape from the train and cause a fire.

According to my grandfather, another foreman became more concerned about the forest fire than my grandfather and Bill. He ordered the train to travel to Jeffrey's Hell and evacuate the families living at the camp. He told the engineer it was urgent and to move quickly. A fireman came along, as did Bill Graves, to help with the evacuation. In his haste, the engineer didn't replace the screen atop the smokestack.

Recounting the events some seventy years later, my grandfather still choked up as he told Weal about the train traveling up the mountain and down again so quickly, it threw off several sparks that ignited the dry timber. One spark landed on a barn, sending it immediately up in flames. As the train full of families began its descent from Jeffrey's Hell, more sparks caught. The blaze spread, trapping the train. Fifty people aboard escaped to a clearing as the train itself caught fire. Bill Graves attempted to put out a blaze but lost his life when he became pinned beneath a felled log. The tape recording of my grandparents went silent for a moment or two, after which they quietly recalled the terrible work of cleaning up the burned areas and estimating the loss, figured to be nearly a million board feet. A tragedy for the town and the lumbermen, it signaled the end of my grandparents' work in the lumber business.

The Babcock Company left Tellico Plains in 1929 when the last of the lumber was removed from the mountainsides, just as the iron ore company, textile mills, and cannery had done before and after them. Babcock sold the then-barren land to the U.S. Forest Service, which appended it to the Cherokee National Forest. The Forest Service tore out the train tracks and replaced them with roads that tourists travel on today. ❖

Lori Tucker-Sullivan is a freelance writer and Director of the Independent Booksellers Consortium. She lives outside Ann Arbor, Michigan, but spent many summers with her family in East Tennessee.

Following in Prehistoric Footsteps:

The Birth of the Mica Industry in Bakersville, North Carolina

Kevin W. Young

Illustration from Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly, *December 1880.*

While riding through the mountains of western North Carolina in the 1850s, Frederick Law Olmstead consulted his map and charted a course toward Tennessee. According to the map, his route would lead through a settlement called Bakersville, but as Olmstead neared Roan Mountain and the North Carolina-Tennessee line, he could not find any such settlement. Baffled, the traveler retraced his route and questioned a number of people—and eventually discovered that Bakersville, North Carolina, was "no town," but "only three log cabins within a distance of a quarter of a mile." As described by another 1850s visitor, Bakersville consisted of nothing but two roadside cabins and a handful of assorted outbuildings. Yet by the time writer Charles Dudley Warner passed through the area thirty years later, Bakersville had blossomed into a thriving village "of some six hundred inhabitants, with two churches, three indifferent hotels, and a court-house."

The 1861 creation of Mitchell County, followed by the subsequent decision to relocate the county seat to Bakersville, had begun the transformation of Bakersville from mere spot-on-the-road into actual village, but an equally important stimulus for growth was the post-Civil-War boom in the mica mining industry. The region around Bakersville contains some of North America's finest deposits of mica—a type of silicate that splits into thin, flexible, translucent sheets. Native Americans had engaged in mining the mineral long before European settlers arrived. Flourishing from about 200 B.C. to 400 A.D., the Hopewell people in present-day Ohio had prized mica, cutting glittering effigies from it and using sheets of it to cover graves within their burial mounds. In order to obtain supplies of the precious mineral, the Hopewell had established trade networks stretching hundreds of miles, from Ohio to the western North Carolina mountains.

The earliest Euro-American settlers had little interest in mica. In the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, frontier settlers occasionally used sheets of mica as window panes, but they had no large-scale com-

mercial applications for the mineral. Not until the late 1860s would the mica deposits in the Bakersville area spark the interest of industry, which had begun using mica "as glazing for gas lamps and stove windows." The person most responsible for drawing attention to the local mica deposits was Thomas Lanier Clingman—antebellum U.S. senator, wartime Confederate general, postwar entrepreneur, and lifelong amateur geologist and geographer. While visiting New York in the summer of 1867, Clingman "learned that mica, owing to the failure of supplies from New England, had become very scarce in the market," and that buyers were paying eight dollars a pound. Well acquainted with the mineral resources of western North Carolina, he suspected that mica could be profitably mined there, and upon returning to his native state, he set off on a tour of the mountain counties to scout for potential mining locations.

After examining a number of sites, Clingman decided that Mitchell County offered "the best prospects for a good supply of the mineral." He came to this conclusion after exploring the remnants of a large prehistoric mica mine on the farm of William Silvers, four miles southeast of Bakersville. A few years later, Clingman described what he had seen on Silvers' farm:

> From the appearances there, it would seem that a large number of miners had been at work for years at that place. In the excavations, extending for about four hundred yards, they had at intervals left bars across as if to prevent the earth at the sides from falling in—thus making a succession of openings fifty or sixty feet in extent, separated by narrow ridges of earth. Timber which I examined that had grown on the earth thrown out, had been growing as long as three hundred years.

Though mined extensively in prehistoric times, the site was still rich in mica. Recognizing its commercial potential, Clingman attempted to secure backing from New York financiers, but the mine's remote location—dozens of miles from the nearest railroad and accessible only by rough mountain roads—discouraged potential investors. In 1868 Clingman attempted to launch mining operations on his own, hiring a resident foreman and crew of workers. But when the foreman quit work to tend to sick family members, mining operations ceased, and Clingman—in poor health and with little capital—abandoned the project and let his lease on the mine expire.

The cursory work done in the summer of 1868 would have unforeseen consequences. When abandoning the project, the miners had left blocks of freshly dug mica strewn on the ground around the open pit. A traveler passing through the area picked up a chunk of the curious mineral and took it with him to Knoxville, where he put it on display. The specimen was seen by John G. Heap of the Heap & Clapp stove company, which used panes of mica in stove windows. Heap recognized the mica's value, and after ascertaining where it had been obtained, he and his partner E.B. Clapp leased the land in Mitchell County from William Silvers and began full-scale mining operations. First called the Silvers' Mine, then later the Sink Hole Mine, the site yielded immense deposits of mica and would continue to be mined commercially for nearly a century. The success of the Sink Hole Mine quickly led to widespread prospecting and the opening of other mica mines in the Bakersville region.

In the early 1870s, as the frenzied excavation of mica rapidly destroyed most remaining traces of prehistoric mining, geologist W.C. Kerr toured Mitchell County and interviewed local miners. The geologist noted that "among all the scores of mines recently opened ... scarcely one has turned out profitably which did not follow the old workings, and strike the ledges wrought by these ancient miners." For Thomas Clingman and others, the choice of location for prospective mica mining was neither serendipitous nor particularly sagacious, for these sites had originally been discovered and mined by Native Americans. The prehistoric miners had left ample evidence of their activities, uncovering vast mica deposits and pointing the way for others to follow in their footsteps. ❖

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An Appalachian Built for the Long Haul

Randy Sanders

Nathan Hall prepares to plant hardwood seedlings on a surface mine site in Pike County, Kentucky. Photo courtesy Green Forests Work.

In a 2008 white paper report to the Lewis Foundation entitled *A New Shared Economy for Appalachia*, Dr. John Todd writes:

> Imagine for a moment a time in the future. You are flying at a low altitude over an Appalachian Valley silently in an electrically powered ultra-light plane whose energy and propulsion is derived from solar cells that are incorporated into the fabric of the wings. Everything below you is green, but in the greenness there is both pattern and variety. In recent years the pattern and variety have been created anew as a result of humanly orchestrated biological restoration on the ground. The last time you saw this land was several decades ago when it was scarred and laid barren by the mountain top removal and valley fill surface methods of mining coal. Then it looked like a moonscape, devoid of both life and people. Today it is different.

According to a May 2012 article by Eric Lipton in the *New York Times*, while coal still provides about a third of the nation's power, just four years ago it was providing nearly half. Last year, even as coal exports to Asia and Europe grew, the Energy Department estimated a seven percent drop in U.S. coal production. Sierra Club accounting shows that a total of fifty-five plants, including the symbolically important Big Sandy plant in the heart of Kentucky coal country, have closed or have announced plans to close, leaving 395 coal-burning plants in the United States, compared to 522 in 2010.

As Dr. Todd points out, "We need to debate whether we want to build a future for Appalachia based on an economy that will destroy its natural resources and last for decades rather than centuries." Nathan Hall, born about an hour's drive from the Big Sandy plant, answers the question Todd implies with conviction.

"This is a critical time in the history of the Appalachian coalfields, with huge shifts toward energy production from cheap natural gas and cheaper coal from Montana and Wyoming," Hall said. "I choose to see this as an opportunity for more sustainable ap-

proaches to resource use that can actually reemploy recently laid off miners, rather than alienate them."

Hall, a thirty-year-old son of Kentucky, was born in Allen, population 150. For nine generations his people have lived in or near Floyd County. Situated just a county away from Kentucky's border with West Virginia and Virginia, Floyd County has a population of just under 40,000. In 1950, the county's population was 53,500. With every ten-year census since then, save one, the county's population has declined, and three of those five declines have been by double digits.

"Growing up as a teenager here, like most other teenagers in my peer group, I thought this was the middle of nowhere," Hall said. "It was just a place to get out of."

When he turned eighteen, he did just that. He lived briefly in Wisconsin and then, for three years, in Louisville, Kentucky, before he felt the pull of home. Part of what makes Hall's story so compelling is that he did return home, but that homecoming eventually led to a year's travel to ten countries.

His tumultuous time in Louisville allowed Hall to experience much of what he had yearned for as a teen. Working as a full-time bicycle messenger for most of his stay there, he concurrently played in indie rock bands, founded a community bike-building program, helped open an inner city community center, and became involved in activism to protect a low-income neighborhood from cancer-causing pollution emitted from a nearby chemical plant.

His involvement with activism eventually led to an awareness that others, mostly from outside Appalachia, were descending on his home region in an effort to stop mountaintop-removal mining. A light switched on—the home he had flippantly abandoned years earlier had at least as many problems as the inner city, and the city would never truly feel like home to him. He decided on an unconventional plan. He would return home to work as an underground coal miner—work that would put some money in his pockets and reconnect him to the region. Eventually, he found work in the mines, where he gained an abiding appreciation for his co-workers.

"In the mines you depend on your coworkers for your safety," he said, "And that creates a bond."

Some members of his family, concerned for his safety, encouraged him to further his education. He applied to and was accepted at Berea College.

"My plan from the get-go was to get a college degree and start some kind of business that could be sustainable, that could provide some kind of alternative for environmental and economic development in the mountains."

At Berea, Hall created an independent study program around sustainable entrepreneurship. He latched on to biodiesel, a renewable, recycled fuel with chemical properties similar to, but safer and cleaner than, diesel. He created a small, fully functional biodiesel plant for the college.

After graduation, he received grant funding from the Kentucky New Energy Venture Fund to start a small, mobile, self-contained biodiesel system. (Web search "kyGREEN.tv video + Nathan Hall" to see Hall talking about the system.)

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By now, parts of his story—visionary son of Eastern Kentucky goes from deep miner to college student to biodiesel entrepreneur—had been featured in *Berea College Magazine, BCNow!, Kentucky Living Magazine,* in the regional blog Daily Yonder, and the Silas House-Jason Howard book *Something's Rising*. But another bit of recognition came that put his sustainable entrepreneurship plans on hold.

In 2010, Hall was named a 2010-2011 Watson Fellow and received a $25,000 grant. The Thomas J. Watson Foundation fellowships are awarded to graduating college seniors (nominated by the foundation's participating colleges) to fund travel outside the United States for one year of independent study. Thus began Hall's travel to ten countries, from Spain to Thailand. He set out to find communities currently or formerly economically dependent on mining while looking for sustainable solutions that apply to such regions. In addition to his personal journal, he kept a fascinating blog entitled There and Back Again (http://hallnathan.blogspot.com/).

He returned home with intentions to start a multi-faceted organization connected by sustainability-related pilot projects in the coalfields—renewable energy, organic agriculture, and ecosystem remediation efforts. While searching for board members, he was recruited by the recently formed Green Forests Work to assist in the reforestation of lands affected by surface mining. He accepted a position as GFW's Reforestation Coordinator.

Established in 2010, GFW is an independent nonprofit with a mission to reforest surface-mined lands throughout Appalachia with native, mostly hardwood, species. Based on the scientific methods established by the Appalachian Regional Reforestation Initiative, GFW hires under-employed and unemployed surface miners to break up the heavily-compacted reclaimed mine spoils with a "deep ripping" shank pulled by a large bulldozer or excavator. GFW then partners with community volunteers and paid labor crews to achieve high-survival reforestation growth rates on these markedly compromised sites.

According to most estimates, over one million acres of land throughout Appalachia have been surface-mined and converted to vast, compacted, exotic scrubland plateaus. Although GFW has successfully reforested nearly 500 acres since its inception, the task is clearly monumental. However, Hall chooses to approach the challenge from a different point of view.

"Native reforestation of mined lands creates significant benefits for downstream water quality, better habitat for wildlife, and a renewable resource that can be used for a variety of wood product industries. But we have to be realistic and try to understand the complexity of the situation. Hundreds of thousands of these acres are owned by outsider landholding companies, while many of the private landowners either want to graze cattle on these lands or believe that some kind of multi-million-dollar development project will be coming any day.

"Personally, I'd like to see a whole mix of projects happening on these areas that includes reforestation, agroforestry, orchards, intensive grazing with lower-impact species like goats and bison, and several kinds of renewable energy," Hall said. "We have a lot of powerful options available that people just don't know about or perceive as a threat to the coal industry, which makes no sense whatsoever."

Many Appalachians share a vision of reclaiming land scarred by expedient extractive methods, but it is one thing to share a vision and quite another to make that vision real. Nathan Hall is in the latter category—he is in this for the long haul.

"If we maintain a sense of hope and continually establish projects that people can see really working, it's just a matter of time before we start to see a positive change happening in the region." ❖

Randy Sanders is Managing Editor of *Now & Then*.

Appalachian Out-Migration

Elaine Fowler Palencia

You see them along the roads at night now
Walking single file out of the graveyards
Wraith-women carrying stillborn babies
War veterans wearing the medals
They were buried with
The usual motorcycle accidents
Innocents done in by old age
Crushed miners and coal truck road kill

Once you remove the mountains
Even the dead won't stay
Soon the elk they've trucked in to distract us
From the desecration
Can drink the polluted water in peace
And breed like cancer.

Elaine Fowler Palencia, of Champaign, Illinois, grew up in Eastern Kentucky. She is the author of the short-story collections *Small Caucasian Woman* and *Brier Country*, as well as two poetry chapbooks.

Pennsylvania Riches

Stephanie Karfelt

Little Beaver Hunting Camp. Photo courtesy author.

Hills and hollows are pronounced "heels and hollers"; creeks and fishing, "cricks and feeshin'"; it's been that way since Roosevelt's New Deal put the Civilian Conservation Corps to work in the mountains of northern Pennsylvania. It's still like that today as oil and gas companies burrow into the Marcellus Shale, in search of natural gas reserves in the Appalachian Basin.

Highway 44 crosses the highest peak of a mountain. Hydraulic fracturing trucks, fishermen, and families on vacation drive past a tarpaper shack with walls constructed mostly of wooden pallets. The old structure leans slightly to the left. The front porch is painted white and red to accentuate faded grey tarpaper. The retired outhouse is visible around back. The Little Beaver hunting camp sits unapologetically among pricey cedar-sided homes and summer homes.

Aaron lost his business during The Great Depression, and he found a job with the Civilian Conservation Corps hacking out roads over Hyner Mountain. The trees were big oaks, maples, and birch, and at the top of the mountain the views over the neighboring low-slung hills stretched to the smoky horizon. Wildlife was as thick as the forest. There were black bear, deer, turkey, fox, and rattlesnakes. Trout flourished in pristine mountain streams, nestled in mossy hollows at the bottoms of steep ridges. The Northern Pennsylvania Mountains were a huntsman's paradise compared with Aaron's coalmining town in the southern portion of the state. Aaron met up with a man named Charlie, and the two hatched a plan to purchase land on the mountain and build a hunting camp. They eventually did it, too, using what materials they could scrounge, and by the mid-1940s they founded a vacation retreat for their families.

Plentiful game justified the luxury of the hunting cabin on the far side of the state. It provided meat for the family, and the outdoor heritage of hunting and fishing was passed on to Aaron's sons and daughter, then to the generations since. Hang-gliders now sail off the grand vistas, and snowmobilers zip along trails hewn by the strength and effort of men almost forgotten. The forests aren't as thick anymore, and gas wells dot the landscape, but great-grandchildren still work their way into the steep hollows to fish for trout in the springtime, and black bear still lumber through the woods, while Aaron's hunting camp leans a bit more to the left with each succeeding winter.

On Memorial Day weekend, several generations gathered at Aaron and Charlie's old hunting camp to put a new tin roof on the rickety cabin. Surely some of the drivers of shiny SUVs and motorcycles passing by questioned their effort. Some of Aaron's descendents commented about the wisdom of their hard work, but they came, and for several hot and humid days they all worked together. This Memorial Day Aaron's descendents paid tribute to a man who fought a war with only an ax—a man who fought a war against poverty and won, to his way of thinking. The Little Beaver Hunting Camp isn't much to look at, but it has provided a rich heritage to generations. ❖

Stephanie Karfelt writes fiction in the Soaring Capital of the World, where she lives with her husband and children.

Fifty Years After *Night Comes to the Cumberlands*: A New Approach to Growth in Eastern Kentucky

Chris Owens

Amy Guerrieri, RAMP's founder, with Martin County children who are enjoying salad from the new school salad bars along with their school lunches. Photo courtesy RAMP.

This year marks an important anniversary in the history of modern Appalachia. Fifty years ago, Harry Caudill's book *Night Comes to the Cumberlands* went to press. At a time when much of the United States was enjoying increases in living standards unprecedented in the nation's history, *Night Comes to the Cumberlands* told a different kind of story—of a region that fueled America's post-war prosperity but reaped none of its rewards. *Night Comes to the Cumberlands* was said to be required reading for White House staffers under President Kennedy, who commissioned a joint federal-state committee in 1963 to develop a comprehensive program for economic development in the region. After President Kennedy's assassination, President Johnson adopted the cause of Appalachian development and incorporated it into his proposals for the Great Society. On April 24, 1964, President Johnson flew via helicopter to Martin County, Kentucky, where he announced the War on Poverty from the front porch of Tom Fletcher, an unemployed sawmill worker. The next year, the Appalachian Regional Commission was born, with the official mission "to be an advocate for and partner with the people of Appalachia to create opportunities for self-sustaining economic development and improved quality of life."

Nearly a half century later, progress has been made in the economic development of Appalachia, and many portions of the region have seen very significant increases in living standards. But the development has been uneven. The funding a county receives seems to have more to do with the influence of its representative in Congress than with that county's need. State leaders have focused on industrial recruitment, emptying state coffers to give tax breaks to companies that have rarely shown up, or to those that do show up and provide only a handful of low-wage, temporary jobs.

As always in Appalachia, the elephant in the room is coal, which can hardly be said to represent a sustainable future for the region. In some counties, especially rural ones like Martin County, a toxic mix of unemployment, underperforming schools, and food insecurity continues to cripple economic growth. Yet in Martin County the innovative work of one non-profit organization can provide an alternative model for counties in Southern Appalachia that face ongoing hardship.

For four years in Martin County, RAMP has been pursuing a multi-pronged approach to community and economic development. Originally under the name of the Rockin' Appalachian Moms Project, RAMP was started by Rockin' Water beverage company CEO Amy Guerrieri after she saw the 2009 ABC News report "Hidden America: Children of the Mountains." Though she had few personal ties to the region at the time, Guerrieri felt compelled to act because of the stories of poverty she saw in the report. She travelled to Martin County to see first-hand the issues facing the county and its children, and to find out how she could help.

"First we asked communities what they needed. We had 100 people in a community center to tell us, and all of our seven programs developed from this," said Guerrieri in a phone interview. As a mother and CEO of a children's fortified water company, Guerrieri said her first objective was to improve the nutrition of children in school. With the assistance of the Southeast Produce Council and Whole Foods Market, RAMP installed salad bars with fresh vegetables at each of the six public schools in Martin County. To provide for children and their families over weekends, RAMP instituted its Backpack Snack program in which students take home a backpack full of healthy, easy-to-prepare foods on two Fridays of each month. At present, 360 students participate in the program, and RAMP hopes to extend it to over 1,000. For families receiving food-stamp assistance from the state, the Backpack Snack program can be vital to making ends meet, especially at the end of the month, when the food stamps have run out. In tandem with efforts to make nutritious foods available to the children of Martin County, RAMP holds in-school nutrition seminars and Family Fun Nights several times a year to teach parents and children about making healthy shopping, cooking, eating, and lifestyle choices.

While RAMP's programs began as short-term relief to children and families in dire need of basics such as food, the organization has evolved to address the long-term issues facing Martin County's economic vitality. From the start, Guerrieri and RAMP have been motivated to "give a hand up, not a handout." With this in mind, RAMP established a large community garden next to the Homecoming Food Pantry in Martin County, as well as smaller gardens next to four of the county's six public schools. Tended by volunteers and students, the gardens supply both the food pantry and local school lunch programs with fresh produce. In three and a half years, these gardens have provided nearly a half million pounds of produce to the people of Martin County. In the near future, RAMP plans to establish gardens at the remaining schools, the community center, and at individual homes, with the goal of producing enough to support commercial activity in farmers markets and elsewhere.

RAMP's efforts address two long-standing and interrelated obstacles to prosperity in Eastern Kentucky: underperformance in schools and low health standards in the general population.

While programs like school salad bars, gardens, and Backpack Snack may seem like small, temporary instances of charity, they are in fact an essential investment in the human capital of the region. RAMP's efforts address two long-standing and interrelated obstacles to prosperity in Eastern Kentucky: underperformance in schools and low health standards in the general population. Furthermore, the prospect of small-scale, sustainable, commercial agriculture taking root in Martin County is encouraging. If successful, RAMP will have created small but significant economic development that years of federal programs and industrial recruitment tax-breaks have failed to achieve.

RAMP's involvement in the economic development of Martin County doesn't stop there. In 2011, the organization made its first microloan, of $3,000, to Inez, Kentucky, resident Betty Harris, to start Calf Creek Creations, a sewing and quilting business. In addition to

the money to start her business, through RAMP Harris received training in computers, accounting, and marketing. Moreover, through RAMP's partnership with Whole Foods, the national supermarket chain made Harris's products available in its stores throughout the Mid-Atlantic region. Today, Calf Creek Creations earns $20,000 a year and has four employees. In a county with an average per capita income of just over $10,000 and an unemployment rate around 9.5 percent, this is a major development.

RAMP's microloan program may seem like a common-sense strategy, but it is precisely this sort of holistic investment that has been lacking in regional development attempts by both non-profit and state authorities over the past several decades. The loan to Harris was not only a business capital investment, but with its associated training, an investment in human and knowledge capital as well. Connecting Calf Creek Creations with Whole Foods Market parallels the goal sought by spending billions of dollars in the Appalachian Development Highway System to link Appalachian producers with markets outside the region.

Perhaps the most exciting of RAMP's economic development initiatives is its Youth in Microenterprise program. Begun in the 2012-13 school year, the program has an enrollment of thirty-seven high-school seniors who, as long as they maintain at least 3.0 grade-point averages, receive professional and entrepreneurial training as they develop their own business plans to provide opportunity in Martin County. At the end of the year, students participate in a "shark tank." Guerrieri, the school superintendent, an economic development specialist, and a local community leader, evaluate the business plans and choose the four most promising. Each student then receives a loan from RAMP and one year of additional training and support that includes pledges from Whole Foods and other retailers to bring the products into their stores.

A young girl at her home in Martin County, Kentucky, with a backpack of food from RAMP's Backpack Snack Program. Photo courtesy RAMP.

As with its nutritional programs, RAMP has an eye to the future for expanding its microfinancing projects. It hopes to offer ten loans between $300 and $3,000 to small business start-ups that promote sustainable, social enterprise in Martin County. Possible future investments include beekeeping, candle-making, and a winery.

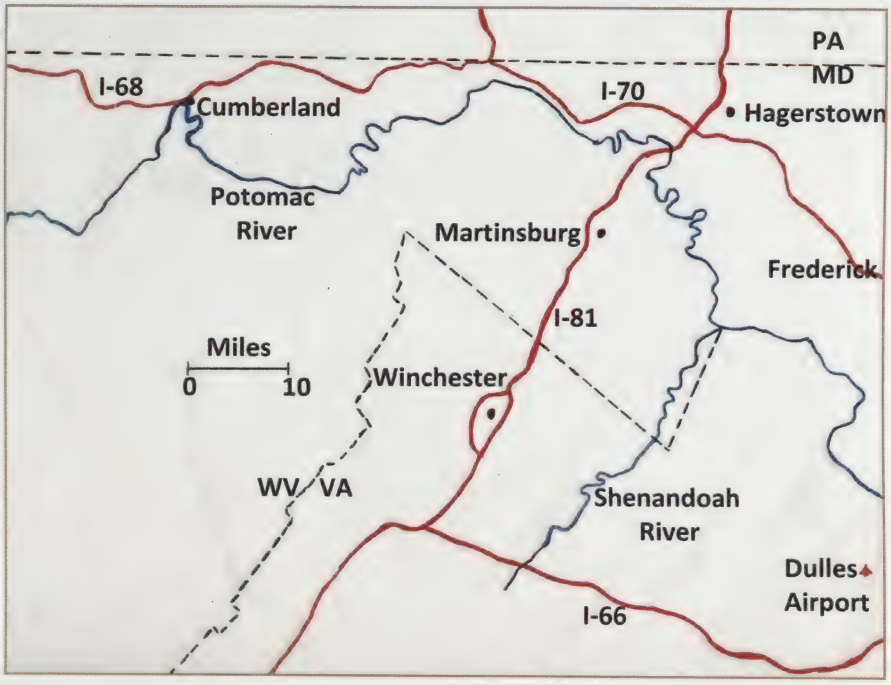
In his book *The End of Poverty*, economist Jeffrey Sachs makes the case for what he calls "clinical economics"—that is, economic development proposals that approach ailing regions as doctors do patients, with focus, openness, and a differential diagnosis that takes multiple factors into account. The issues facing economic and industrial development in Southern Appalachia are multifold and cannot be effectively cured by a homogenous and homogenizing policy of industrial recruitment and a continued reliance on diminishing and destructive extractive industries.

By drawing upon the modern scholarship of Sachs and the moral imperative set forth by Harry Caudill fifty years ago, we can expect a brighter path ahead for counties still grappling with economic underdevelopment. The holistic, community-driven approach taken by RAMP in Martin County is but one example. As in medicine, there are no panaceas, and good health is not achieved overnight. But, says Guerrieri, "The quote we hear from every person we've touched or helped is, 'You've given us hope.'" And that may be the greatest economic engine of all. ❖

After studying for two years at East Tennessee State University, Chris Owens graduated with a degree in history from Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island. He now lives in New Orleans.

Coming and Going in Opposite Directions:
Cumberland, Maryland, and Winchester, Virginia

Floyd B. Johnson



Map courtesy author.

For the better part of a quarter century, I've owned a place in West Virginia's eastern panhandle, halfway between Cumberland, Maryland, and Winchester, Virginia. With those two cities being the closest places to get supplies, hardware essentials, and a bite to eat, I've gotten to know them. Only fifty miles separate the two cities as the crow flies, yet the divide is much wider.

In 1940 Cumberland had more than three times as many people, but in 2010 Winchester was more populous by a considerable amount. The last time the U.S. Census reported fewer people living in Cumberland was 1900. This shift in population shows quite a change in fortune for the two cities. A similar situation is reflected in the Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA). In 1970, Cumberland's MSA population almost doubled Winchester's. Forty years later Winchester's MSA population outranked Cumberland by a fifth. While the Winchester area gained more than 73,000 people, the Cumberland area lost close to 4,500. With a median age of forty-one and over one-fifth the population over sixty-five, time is not on Cumberland's side. By comparison, Winchester has a median age of just over thirty-five years and only fourteen percent of population over sixty-five.

The big questions are: What happened? How did Winchester thrive while Cumberland became a place to leave?

Cumberland and Winchester are home to many preserved historical sites, and both downtown sections are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Settlers began arriving in the Winchester area in the 1730s, and county government was established a decade later. George Washington held his first political position in Winchester when he represented the area in the Virginia House of Burgesses. A trading post that became Fort Cumberland was built in 1750, and it quickly became an important site in the French and Indian War. Cumberland also became an important jumping off point for exploration and settlement of the vast Ohio River Valley to the west. George Washington had military headquarters in both Cumberland and Winchester. For the rest of

Historical Populations of Cumberland, Maryland, and Winchester, Virginia			
	1940 Population	1970 Population	2010 Population
Cumberland	39,483	29,724	20,859
Cumberland MSA*		107,850	103,283
Winchester	12,095	14,643	26,203
Winchester MSA*		55,450	128,730

*Metropolitan Statistical Area (city + surrounding area)

the eighteenth century and much of the nineteenth, the towns grew at similar paces.

Cumberland, situated at a hairpin turn where the Potomac River joins Wills Creek, is still called the Queen City, as it was once the second largest city in Maryland. By the late nineteenth century, Cumberland had become a regional economic powerhouse with the western terminus of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, the starting point of the National Road, an important railroad center, substantial coalfields nearby, and a manufacturing center. The twentieth century, with a boom and then a bust, was at first kind but ultimately cruel to Cumberland. Between 1900 and 1930, the city population more than doubled; however, C&O Canal operations ceased in 1924, and the post-World War II industrial contraction that hurt various places decimated Cumberland, particularly in the 1970s and '80s. Brewing ceased in 1976, glass-making halted in 1981, textile production left in 1983, and tire manufacturing stopped in 1987. Today, with barely half the people it had in 1940, the Queen City is the sixtieth largest city in Maryland. The only real hint to Cumberland's thriving past is the continued presence of the large CSX rail yard on the south side of town. Sadly, many people are now being held against their will in Cumberland. In addition to Maryland's large Western Correctional Institute, federal and county prisons in the Cumberland area make jails a substantial component of the local economy.

Winchester's story reads very differently. Located at the top of the Shenandoah Valley, it was a sleepy town surrounded by farming and fruit orchards for a long time. The Civil War laid waste to the Shenandoah Valley and Winchester, which changed hands over seventy times and bore significant damage.

Starting in the 1940s and continuing to the present, the Winchester area has seen a transformation driven by steady double-digit population increases every decade. Orchards still play a significant role. Frederick County is by far the largest apple-producing county in Virginia. The Apple Blossom Festival, held each year since 1924, marks the importance of apples to Winchester.

While orchards hearken back to Winchester's past, two factors have driven its remarkable growth: Interstate 81 and Washington, DC. I-81, built in the mid-1960s and paralleling the old valley pike Route 11, connects to Interstate 66 coming from the Washington area just south of Winchester. Anyone who has driven I-81 knows how much commerce, including light manufacturing goods from Winchester, is shipped on that north-south highway. Virginia recognized that fact and in 1989 created an inland port nearby.

The I-81 effect can be seen in nearby counties. Immediately to the north, Berkeley County's population has almost tripled since 1970, and Shenandoah County to the south has almost doubled its population in the same period. The Washington, D.C., area added over two million people between 1970 and 2010. Winchester is only fifty miles from Dulles Airport, and many people commute to the Washington area from Winchester.

There are many scenic vistas looking up, down, and out around Cumberland. The view from the southeast with high church steeples sticking up against a background of The Narrows, a water gap formed by Wills Creek as it cuts through Wills and Haystack Mountains, is a wonderful picture postcard. But that scene cannot conceal the ugly presence of I-68 slicing through the city. Actually it doesn't go through but above as if trying to rise above the city—or worse, put it down. In the early 1970s the century-old Queen City Hotel was torn down to make way for the road and the marring of the city. The situation was not repeated in Winchester. I-81 skirts the city to the east, and with Route 37 going to the west, a beltway is formed around Winchester without disturbing the downtown

Downtown Winchester, Virginia.
Photo courtesy author.

Downtown Cumberland, Maryland.
Photo courtesy Visit Cumberland Maryland.

area. On top of all this, I-68, not completed until 1991, is no I-81. It carries nowhere near the truck volume and is a much shorter spur rather than a long main line. Being almost 140 miles from Baltimore and Washington, Cumberland does not gain from the thriving economies of those cities as Winchester does. In fact, Cumberland does not gain from any large city. Pittsburgh is the closest at 120 miles away.

Sitting on a wide valley floor separated from high ground by miles, Winchester has none of Cumberland's setting, and getting a panoramic picture of the city takes some real doing. With the Shenandoah ten miles away, Winchester also doesn't have a river. But a thriving downtown with restored commercial and residential buildings, busy shopping mall, a diversified economy that includes light manufacturing, and a substantial medical center give Winchester what Cumberland can only wish for. A more stark comparison could not be found than the two downtown walking malls. Winchester's is twice as long and home to considerable businesses, restaurants, and people walking about. Cumberland's is often vacant and sparsely visited. Cumberland was officially formed as a town in 1787. Winchester, established in 1752, is both older and younger than Cumberland and has the complete package: a well-preserved past, strong present, and a prosperous future.

But I see glimmers of hope in Cumberland. All those people busy making money in the Baltimore-Washington area will want a pleasant escape. Cumberland is pinning a good part of its economic growth on tourism, as evidenced by the formation of a local arts and entertainment district. Canal Place, commemorating the terminus of the C&O Canal, continues to be developed, with plans to include boat rides on a restored a section of the canal. My favorite is the now linked Great Allegheny Passage and C&O trails, which allow visitors to ride a bike from near Pittsburgh through Cumberland to Washington, D.C., without sharing the road with motorized vehicles. This 320-mile route, the longest such biking trail in the United States, is a true gem. And Cumberland would be a good place to put down roots, with real estate costs less than half those in Winchester.

There's no question which town I prefer: Cumberland. It has a remarkable setting, many recreational opportunities, and comes at a slower pace that pleases the country boy in me. In and around Cumberland, I've gotten my canoe wet, my hiking shoes scuffed, and my bike tires worn. I've taken a ride on a train pulled by an old steam engine and been seated in good restaurants at all hours without a wait. But if I'm looking to buy something or make some money, Winchester is where I go. Being between these two towns gives me the best of both worlds. ❖

Floyd B. Johnson is co-editor of *The Ecoletter*, the quarterly magazine of the Chesapeake Water Environment Association.

Sunday in the Smokies

Mary Anne Reese

It was back before the transport vans
wound up and down the mountain,
before the helmets, watershoes
and fleets of tubes all matched
in day-glo green, before it cost
twelve dollars to rent an afternoon,
and certainly before the knees,
the frozen shoulder or the paunch.

Back then, we wore cut-off jeans
and sneakers that stayed damp
and smelled like rotting leaves.
We tied truck innertubes
four-high atop the Rambler
and headed for the Sinks.

The first plunge brought a gasp, a cry.
Sometimes we simply floated in the sun.
Other times a rush, a waterfall,
a scream, a gash. Once we passed
a drainage pipe all dark inside
except that pair of luminescent eyes.
In sheets of rain, the river swelled
and almost whisked us to Cancun.
Hang on, toes up, now raise your rump.

At Townsend Wye, we climbed
like salamanders from the stream,
rubbed bruises, wrung
our drenched hair out. We rolled
our tubes back up the road,
step by sloshing step.

Mary Anne Reese is a poet and attorney who divides her time between Cincinnati and her birthplace, Knoxville, Tennessee. She is author of a poetry chapbook, *Raised by Water*.

The Golden Age of Health Springs Tourism in the Rural East Tennessee Valley

Chris Baker

Tate Springs in the 1930s. Photo courtesy Kingswoodhistory.net.

Rethinking Appalachia's Early Resort Tourism

Appalachia's contemporary tourist economy and culinary renaissance were preceded by a history of locally-owned mineral resorts connected to a small-scale agricultural economy. Beginning in the 1870s, mineral spring hotels in the region cultivated national markets by selling the benefits of mountain water and summer climate to tourists seeking cures for diseases and relief from oppressive temperatures. The tourist economy thrived due to a delicate balance of interests supporting a small-scale interior rail system opening up the area to agricultural markets between 1880 and the 1930s. The most prolific mineral water luxury resorts in the East Tennessee valley were located in small crossroad towns along the base of Clinch Mountain in Grainger and Hawkins counties. Mostly locally-owned and -operated, the seasonal hotels were early indigenous commercial enterprises. The largest of these, such as Tate Springs, introduced tourists, elites, and dignitaries to regional culture and cuisine while creating local jobs and multiplier businesses.

The resorts are a reminder of Appalachia's indigenous rural economies and the historical role tourism has played in the region. They also provide a blueprint for understanding the multiple local effects of investing in small businesses and rural farming in the contemporary period.

Interior Rails and Valley Commerce

Historians have documented the role of railroad companies in mineral extractive industries as a key feature of the political economy of Appalachia. Another story of the region's railroads was their role in slowly opening rural agricultural markets and in increasing commerce through passenger traffic in the valley regions. According to the state soil survey, by 1910 much of the farming in the valley was still general, with poorer farms and tenants on unimproved land on eroded hillsides. Wealthier farms on good soil were along main routes but faced constricted markets. Beginning in the late 1880s, locally-owned rail companies created interior multiuse passenger, produce, and freight lines eventually known as "Peavines." After 1900, the Southern Railroad took over East Tennessee's interior rail system. One of the best-known Peavines was the Knoxville and Bristol interior line running from Morristown through Bean Station to Corryton. The Peavine provided a dedicated line for tourists to resorts along Richland Valley at the base of Clinch Mountain to Grainger and Hawkins counties. The trains were multiuse, serving not only passengers, including schoolchildren, but also delivering mail and merchandise such as mineral water, tanning bark, kerosene, poultry, eggs, and hogs. The lines provided local jobs hauling timber and making crossties.

According to archeologist Charles Faulkner, the Peavine moved slowly, requiring switching operations as it served as a mixed line with a three-person crew, coaches, and freight cars. Hogs from rural farms were driven to flatcars and boxcars left by branch lines, then reloaded onto main rail lines. While slow, the trains provided doorstep service to farms or picked up produce at small stops and stations. The railroads replaced regional livestock-driving or an overnight horse and wagon trip to a market. In some cases, small farmers directly reached

national markets. Accessing rural producers created industries such as Lay Packing in Knoxville and warehouses in Morristown.

Appalachia's Other Resources

Appalachia's early mineral water resorts began in the 1800s, reviving with the arrival of railroads after the Civil War and then again at the turn of the century. Today, from North Georgia to New York, almost every location in the region's expanding tourist economy markets mineral springs as selling points for mountain destinations. The impact of mineral waters on the region spans from spa towns such as Hot and Warm Springs, Virginia; Hot Springs in Madison, North Carolina; and Berkeley Springs in West Virginia, to elite hotels like Asheville's Grove Park Inn and West Virginia's Greenbrier. Even though mineral water tourism is an important part of the region's past, little is understood about its role in early development strategies.

After the Civil War, East Tennessee marketed mineral resorts in both valley and mountainous counties. The largest concentrations in the valley were mineral springs found on farmlands and taverns along the Clinch Mountain basin running from Grainger County in Richland Valley to Bean Station through Mooresburg and Rogersville in Hawkins County. The Tennessee State Board of Health reported that the state had 290 springs and fifty-seven resorts in 1887, more than any other state. According to Killebrew's Resources of Tennessee, diseases in the Deep South drove the industry:

> There are many of these springs that have reputations co-extensive with the union on account of their curative properties. It cannot be doubted that the pure air, magnificent scenery, cooling breezes, and other healthful influences, will make these watering places favorite summer resorts for all the states in the lower latitude. Especially do we refer to those places in East Tennessee and on the Cumberland Table Land, many of which are handsomely improved and offer accommodations equal to the best. During the past summer [1873] they were crowded with persons from cholera and the miasmas which inflicted the lower districts. Swarms of visitors from Atlanta, Macon, Savannah, Charleston, New Orleans, and Chattanooga, sought these airy retreats, where blankets are in request during the hottest nights of summer.

As the railroads expanded their reach, a golden age of mineral spring tourism emerged behind medical claims of the water's ability to cure and slow ailments and disorders. Just as important, the resorts increased commerce, selling the area to the nation—a continual theme in Appalachia's political economy.

The Golden Era of East Tennessee Valley Mineral Resorts

The region's mineral resorts sold all aspects of mountain culture and ecosystems. The resorts were on operating farms, used local produce, and hired cooks, waiters, and other staff to serve local and international guests. Many of the larger plantations, such as Mineral Hill and Tate Springs, sold water outside the region. The resorts emerged out of early plantations, expanding farmhouses into bed and breakfast establishments and farms into recreational grounds. Most of the springs advertised after the Civil War eventually served as local water supplies. Small valley operations—Klipperts, Alums, Clinchdale, and Powder springs—remained unimproved after 1900. The Beal Farm in Hawkins County was a local tourist site with its Ebb and Flow Spring moving in an ocean tide pattern.

The larger resorts became popular and exclusive destinations while small resorts along the main rail lines and closest to crossroads were the most likely to survive into the 1920s. In Grainger County, Lea Springs was the plantation of Major Lea before his descendants turned it into The Springs in the 1880s. Lea Springs advertised chalybeate or iron water and both white and black sulphur waters as cures for malarial afflictions and as a nerve tonic and exhilarant. Avondale Springs advertised itself in the 1904 University of Tennessee Record as "The Little Eden." The hotel ran a hack or wagon to meet trains for fifty cents and rented rooms for thirty dollars a week, giving teachers special rates on shared rooms. Still intact in the 1960s, Mooresburg Springs originated as a Victorian resort on the Kentucky Road through Hawkins County.

The largest of the resorts was Tate Springs near Bean Station. The first phase was built by Samuel Tate and expanded into a world-class resort by Thomas Tomlinson after 1876. According to a later brochure, in its prime the resort housed over 500 guests and employed twenty-five people in the summer. The resort generated its own electricity and had thirty out-buildings, 800 shade trees, and a golf course trimmed by sheep. On the scale of Asheville's Grove Park Inn, Tate Springs connected rural East Tennessee to the nation's elite. By 1904, Tomlinson advertised the expanded resort to a national urban audience in journals like the *Wine and Spirit Bulletin*, touting stopover rail privileges, electric lights, water works, steam heat, and long-distance telephones. According to *Wish You Were Here: Retreat to Tennessee Historical Resorts* by the Tennessee State Archives:

> Frequented by the likes of the Fords, Rockefellers, Firestones, Studebakers and Mellons, Tate Spring (Grainger County) operated as a world-class luxury resort during its prime in the early 1900s. Its "Tate Epsom Water" was shipped all over the world as a cure for stomach, kidney, and liver ailments. The Peavine Railroad, completed in 1896, brought in the clientele, with the richest arriving in private rail cars. They treated themselves to the stables, tennis courts, billiards room, ballroom, 100-acre park, and golf course.

After its heyday, Tate Springs became Kingswood School, a facility for troubled youth. The dilapidated hotel was bought by the Wachtel family in 1943, and the hotel's rooms were used by foster and abused children as a dorm until the hotel burned in 1964. Today, Kingswood School continues to serve children in cabins on the original hotel grounds.

While Tate Springs may have been world famous by the end of the era, the bulk of tourists came from close by. In *Ghost Railroads of Tennessee*, Elmer G. Sulzer wrote:

> But the simpler folk enjoyed picnics during the summer season two or more times at points reached by the K &B. The favorite spots were Avondale Springs and Shield's Grove, stations approximately three miles apart. It is said that the Presbyterians favored Avondale with its chalybeate, Lithia and sulphur springs while the Methodists usually went to Shield's Grove.

Hawkins County's resorts were served indirectly by both the Peavine and the Bulls Gap and Rogersville Railroad, with Rogersville a stopping-off location. Southwest of Rogersville near Short Mountain, Galbraith Springs began as a small resort, and after 1900, owners built a 21,000-square-foot hotel with 125 rooms on a 700-acre farm. Guests took a hack from the Russellville train station near Morristown. They enjoyed large home-cooked meals, horseshoes, tennis, bowling, dancing, and an after-dinner drink of corn liquor and spring water. In Happy Valley in Hawkins County, Hale Springs resort advertised epsom, iron, and red and black sulphur water. Travelers came to the resort staying first at the Hale Springs Inn in Rogersville then took a twelve-mile wagon ride to the resort. According to local historian Rodney Ferrell, the twenty-seven slave cabins on site later became segregated housing for black servants and guests.

In 1909, the resort was acquired by George L. Berry for the location of Pressmen's Home, headquarters of the International Printing Pressmen and Assistants Union of North America. At that time the resort was on 519 acres with a power plant and a partially-finished 100- room hotel. Along with the resort building, the union built a thirty-five-bed tuberculosis sanatorium, hotel, and technical trade school. Located to take advantage of the springs and the "climatic advantage," Pressmen's Home remained on the grounds as the nation's largest community union until the 1960s.

From Mineral Resorts to Local Foods and Back Again

Between the 1880s and the 1920s, East Tennessee's multiuse interior rail system hastened an era of resort tourism, but the depression destroyed the economic gains. According to the Department of Agriculture, almost half of Grainger County farmers were tenants in 1940. Most small farms sent their sons and daughters to surrounding factory jobs after the war. Along with industrialization, a new era of tourism emerged in the 1940s around federal development projects, creating broad-scale recreational and residential development along TVA lakes and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Today rural development is the region's chief challenge with deindustrialization increasingly dislocating communities. Grainger County continues to be a land of family farms surrounded by Cherokee and Norris lakes. Support, however, is increasing for local food systems from the region's emerging middle- and tourist-classes. The county has become a renowned regional tomato producer with a tomato festival, local and organic foods enterprises, truck farming, produce stores, farmers markets, and roadside stands. Similar to the resorts selling water, modern hobby farms market corn mazes, pick-your-own produce, and lifestyles. One small farmer recently reported that besides raising cattle and hay, he hauled pumpkins to Knoxville and let children come pick their own and "run around in the patch."

After a half century of chasing smokestacks, the region is re-examining the small-scale economies of earlier times and moving toward greater understanding and support for local foods and farmers on ancestral land. ❖

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"Why Not Greeneville?"

Magnavox Comes to Appalachia

George Collins

This photo from a 1957 Life *magazine article, "Community Boosters in Bootstrap Booms," features women hand assembling components in Greeneville's Magnavox Plant #2. Photo courtesy author.*

At the conclusion of World War II, American industry shifted from the production of wartime goods to products that met pent-up consumer demand. For postwar America, new and exciting household goods were essential to a modern way of life. For the Magnavox Company of Fort Wayne, Indiana, the desire for the latest in home entertainment meant a revitalization of its consumer electronics business. Like America, Magnavox was ready to move forward.

Magnavox president Richard A. O'Connor, however, found that parts suppliers were not equipped to meet the surge in demand. To compete, Magnavox needed to develop company-owned production sites for such essential components as console cabinets for its radios. O'Connor began exploring possible locations in the South, first targeting Hot Springs, North Carolina. On an exploratory visit, he took a side trip to Greeneville, Tennessee, to have dinner with an old friend at the Brumley Hotel, now the General Morgan Inn.

Katharine Crozier, a native of Greeneville, had known O'Connor from their time working for the war effort in Washington, D. C. Crozier invited O'Connor to have dinner with a group of Greeneville leaders, including T. D. Brabson, President of the First National Bank; attorney S. J. Milligan; and John M. Jones, Sr. and Edith O. Susong of *The Greeneville Sun*. During the course of the dinner, the question "Why not Greeneville?" was seriously discussed.

As a result, O'Connor took a tour of a new tobacco warehouse at the corner of North Irish and Hardin streets. After negotiations, the warehouse was purchased by Magnavox in March of 1947, subsequently becoming the Greeneville Cabinet Company. Greeneville's first Magnavox employee, personnel director Clifford S. Hendry, hired 150 employees, and Magnavox's first consumer products plant in the South began production of radio console cabinets. The first unit was built in June 1947.

The move to the South put Magnavox closer to a growing consumer market and an available labor pool with a lower wage base than could be found in the North. Greeneville, in turn, found a solution to the employment problem of returning war veterans. In 1957, *Life* magazine

ran an article entitled "Community Boosters in Bootstrap Booms," featuring eight communities in the United States that addressed the need for jobs after World War II. Among them was Greeneville:

> Virtually a one-industry tobacco town in 1945, Greeneville was stirred to act by fear that returning G.I.s would move out. Townsmen raised $102,000 and formed the Greene County Foundation. Encouraging new industries with sites, loans, and facilities, Greeneville now produces 100 new products, from elastic to chairs. Newcomer, which upped Greeneville's payrolls $11 million a year, is Magnavox. Town grew from 5,800 to 9,500 in 10 years.

Greeneville was also featured in the 1954 television program, *Industry on Parade*, presented by the National Association of Manufacturers. The program extolled Greeneville's shift from agriculture to manufacturing. Shown were new appliances being delivered to newly-constructed homes, new grade-schools being built with new tax revenues, a new church (Notre Dame Catholic), and a new country club (Link Hills).

At first, the Greeneville Cabinet Company produced phonograph and radio console cabinets for Magnavox in the converted tobacco warehouse on North Irish Street (Plant No. 1). Radio chassis were in production by 1948. By 1950, black-and-white televisions were being assembled for American homes. The Snapps Ferry Road facility (Plant No. 2) opened in 1952, as Magnavox grew from 150 to 500 employees. In 1963, Magnavox opened a new state-of-the-art facility (Plant No. 3) on Snapps Ferry Road and Kiser Boulevard, where console color televisions and television/stereo units were produced for an eager American market.

Magnavox celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary in the South in 1972. At that time, it consisted of three main divisions: Consumer Electronics, Government & Industrial, and Home Furnishings & Music. The Magnavox Company of Tennessee had ten plants and seven locations: Greeneville, Jefferson City, Johnson City, and Morristown in Tennessee; Andrews and Arden in North Carolina; and Flora, Mississippi, producing electronic components, plastics, and cabinets. During this anniversary year, Magnavox employed a workforce of 3,000 in its Greeneville plants alone.

By 1974, however, Magnavox was feeling the effects of a major recession and a stock market downturn that sent shares to record lows. Recognizing a business opportunity, N. V. Philips, a Dutch multinational conglomerate, purchased Magnavox for $180 million. For Greeneville, the purchase of Magnavox by Philips meant a continuation of the Magnavox brand and jobs.

In 1982, Philips added 800 jobs to an existing Greeneville workforce. Employment continued to rise until early in the 1990s, when it peaked at 4,988. This number includes the National Distribution Center that adjoined Plant No. 3. This production and shipping site was the largest Philips facility under one roof in the United States.

The 25-millionth color television rolled off the assembly line in 1991.The production capacity for Greeneville in the early 1990s was three million televisions per year, with plants producing up to 10,000 color televisions per day in three shifts. In addition to the Magnavox name, products made in Greeneville carried Philips, Sylvania, and Philco

The Sound of History

George Collins

In 1911, Edwin Pridham and Peter Jensen founded the Commercial Wireless and Development Company in Napa, California. Their aim was to perfect and advance wireless and telephone transmission. While exploring sound reproduction in 1915, they discovered a way to electronically amplify sound. By attaching an electro-dynamic amplifier to the tapered end of an Edison horn, which was then connected to a phonograph, they created the first loudspeaker. This GREAT VOICE, or *MAGNA VOX* in Latin, marked a new age in sound broadcasting.

The Commercial Wireless and Development Company merged with the Sonora Phonograph Distributing Company of San Francisco in 1917. From this merger, Pridham, Jensen, and their business partner, Richard E. O'Connor, formed the Magnavox Company. The newly-formed company brought together innovative genius and a ready-made sales network. With the introduction of the first single-dial radio, the Magnavox Company flourished.

In the late 1920s, Richard A. O'Connor, the son of Magnavox founder and first president Richard E. O'Connor, was elected president of the Magnavox Company. In order to centralize operations, he moved the company to Chicago. In 1930, it was decided that the company would be headquartered in Fort Wayne, Indiana, the center of wire production.

labels. A fourth facility opened in 1991 along Industrial Road as a circuit board manufacturing plant.

By the mid-1990s, the fiercely competitive consumer electronics market began feeling the full impact of globalization. In response, the Philips Consumer Electronics Co. had to reassess its production strategy. The 1996 decision by Philips to sell its Greeneville television manufacturing plant, injection molding plant, printed circuit board plant, warehouses, and service refurbishing operation sent shockwaves through the community. The end of a proud and productive partnership was at hand.

Philips sold its Greeneville television operation to two East Tennessee natives, George Taylor and Charles White, in 1997. Under the corporate name Five Rivers Electronic Innovations, televisions were produced for Philips, along with Akia, Samsung, and Zenith. By 2000, a slowing economy and low-cost imports forced Five Rivers to close three of its ten production lines. Further cost-cutting measures were taken when Philips cancelled its contract in 2004. After Samsung cancelled its contract in 2005, Five Rivers filed for bankruptcy protection. The Five Rivers plant closed in 2006, making it the last American-owned television manufacturer in the United States.

Today, Magnavox is a registered trademark of Royal Philips Electronics. Under a licensing agreement with Philips, Funai Electric Co. Ltd. of Japan has acquired the right to use the Magnavox name. While Magnavox no longer has a presence in Greeneville and Appalachia, its story is a testament to the people, the pride, and the products that changed America. ❖

During this period, Magnavox acquired the Electro-Acoustic Products Company, headed by a brilliant young engineer, Frank M. Freimann. Magnavox also introduced the first high-fidelity phonograph. These two events proved crucial to Magnavox's future success.

Not the Biggest, but the Best

In 1950, Frank Freimann became president and chief executive officer of the Magnavox Company, serving until his death on March 30, 1968. He was known for his uncompromising insistence on quality, which became a hallmark of Magnavox, from the design of its cabinetry to the superiority of its sound. Freimann boasted that Magnavox may not be the biggest, but it was the best.

Under Freimann, Magnavox sales rose from $30 million to $464 million. In Greeneville alone the workforce quadrupled and facilities increased to more than one-million square feet. At Freimann's death, all Magnavox offices and operating facilities closed for one day in his honor. Freimann's tenure is often described as the "Glory Years" of Magnavox.

Vision for America

Following World War II as Magnavox pushed into consumer products, it understood America's desire for quality and products that reflected our individuality. The housing boom also provided the opportunity to have a fine piece of furniture that would become the centerpiece of communal family entertainment. We not only distinguished ourselves by what we purchased but by how we used it. Freimann believed that Magnavox's consumer products should elevate the American home. Each home was seen as unique, each family central to the American dream. As American values and lifestyles changed, Magnavox responded with new design concepts and technological advances. Magnavox's vision for America, however, remained constant. Innovation and quality: These were America's assurance for a better tomorrow. The images on the following pages reflect Magnavox's vision for America. ❖

George Collins is the retired director of the Museum Program and Studies at Tusculum College in Greeneville, Tennessee. Over the past three years, he has worked with the Magnavox Historical Preservation Association collecting Magnavox artifacts and developing two exhibits on the history of the company and its products.

Magnavox's Vision for America:
A Pictorial History

George Collins

Right: *The Magnavox TRF-5 Radio (1924) was the first single-dial radio made in America. Also shown is the Magnavox R3 Horn Speaker.*

Far Right: *Magnavox used this logo beginning with its move to Fort Wayne, Indiana in 1930.*

Left: *The Mayfair (1947) was the first prototype produced in Greeneville, Tennessee. It included a radio and record player and featured contemporary styling.*

Magnavox...a lasting investment in gracious living
Today, in the relaxed comfort of your home, you can give a symphony concert for your family and friends. You can re-create the world's great music precisely as the composer meant it to be played and as famous symphony orchestras interpret it. For the new Magnavox radio-phonograph accurately reproduces the tuneness of tone of the living performance. This superb instrument is one of the better things in life you can give your family.
Designed to hold its place over the years
Combining the wonders of radio science, F. M. and automatic record changing with the best in furniture craft, Magnavox is built to grace your home over the years. Authentic designs are made with all the skill of the cabinetmaker's art. Look for Magnavox in America's fine stores. See, hear and compare it with all other radio-phonographs. Once you hear Magnavox you won't be satisfied until you own one. Your choice of furniture models starting at $200. Regency Symphony shown, approximately $400. The Magnavox Co., Fort Wayne 4, Ind.
Magnavox
RADIO PHONOGRAPH
Symbol of Quality in Radio—Since 1915

Above: The Regency Symphony (1947) is a two-way unit with radio and record player. It contains a separate FM (Frequency Modulation) unit.

Right: The original mold of a logo adopted by Magnavox in 1954. Each of the five design elements, oscillating waves, masks of comedy and tragedy, harp, lion, and horn and electrolytic symbol, represents part of Magnavox's history.

Above: *This 1951 table top television has a solid oak cabinet. Though advertised as "portable" it takes two people to lift it.*

Above Left: *The Windsor Imperial Entertainment Center (1949), based on the style of Thomas Chippendale, featured an AM/FM and shortwave radio, record player, and "Magnascope" television.*

Below Left: *This Cherry French Provincial (1954) featured a radio, record player, and television and was built in Greeneville, Tennessee.*

Below: *In the early 1950s, movie stars were not permitted to appear on television, but nothing in their contracts said they couldn't sell TVs. Magnavox used this loophole to great advantage. This ad features Dean Martin, Jerry Lewis, Marion Marshall, and Polly Bergen.*

Left: Magnavox's first all-transistor radio was made in 1956. The only thing it had in common with its 1924 predecessor was that both operated on battery power.

Only Magnavox combines Magnacolor and Astro-Sonic*
Stereo Hi-Fi in one family-entertainment theatre
Model 552 with Stereo FM and FM/AM radio-phonograph. In beautiful hand-rubbed Walnut, $905.
*Astro-Sonic—the revolutionary space-age development that eliminates all tubes and surpasses all previous achievements in the re-creation of music.

Right and Below: This Astro-Sonic 3-way unit with color television was part of the Magnavox "Imperial" line; it was built in August 1965.

Above: *Magnavox created the Spirit of '76 collection in celebration of the 200th year of American independence. The collection epitomized Magnavox's reputation for innovative and artistic craftsmanship. This two-way blanket chest featuring Pennsylvania German "folk art" was built in 1974.*

Right: *Magnavox called The Venetian (1974) "a classic reproduction of Old World Artistry." It features an AM/FM radio, 8-track tape player,a Micromatic record changer, and classic decorations.*

Below: *The Oriental (1975) features three colors of wood, inwardly curved feet, and a pagoda style top. It houses six speakers, AM/FM radio, automatic record changer, 8-track tape player, and 4-channel decoder.*

Magnavox Milestones

1949 — Chromatic Filter for TV
eased eyestrain and set new standards for all TV manufacturers.

1958 — Stereophonic High-Fidelity Radio-Phonographs
the introduction of stereo sound in one instrument for the home.

1961 — Videomatic
an "electric-eye" that automatically adjusted the TV picture according to the room environment.

1962 — Astro-Sonic High Fidelity
eliminated vacuum tubes with fully transistorized pre-amp, amplifier, and tuner.

1969 — Total Automatic Color
automatic tint and color control system.

1972 — Odyssey
the first home video game.

1974 — Star Television
the tuning system that allowed choice of channels on a remote control, the forerunner of the remote control on virtually all of today's televisions.

Magnavision — 1978
the laser is introduced to home entertainment via movies in the laserdisc format.

Compact Disc — 1983
introduced to the U.S. by Magnavox.

Universal Remote Control — 1986
now one remote can control both TV and VCR.

Compact Disc Video — 1987
known as the CDV, this was the first video software in the compact disc format. A forerunner of the DVD.

Smart Sound — 1992
also known as automatic volume control, this feature eliminated annoying increases in TV volume, usually found in commercials.

Remote Locator — 1993
if the remote control is missing, simply turn on your TV manually. The remote will beep to reveal its location.

All artifact photographs in *Magnavox's Vision for America: A Pictorial History* by Chris Small Photography & Fine Art.

Hillbillies at the Center of Civilization

Victor Depta

A private man, a quiet woman
with as little effect as the sumacs
not being decorative at the capitol
or elsewhere, with their decimated past

a creek beside the road
a mountain at the back door
mine wars, strikes, floods, fires
and they were not there at Treblinka, Nagasaki

only the nightly news
as from Afghanistan on TV, as from Fukushima
and yet, in their slanted house
they are not an island

Tierra del Fuego, or Eskimo
Pygmies, Yanomami or Pueblo
but in the mountains which fall
as the satellites call out to them.

Victor M. Depta is Publisher of Blair Mountain Press in Frankfort, Kentucky. He is author of several collections of poems, plays, essays, and novels.

Printer's Ink and Blood:
The Strange Story of David Stephenson

Wayne Winkler

D. C. Stephenson's mug shot. From The Dragon and the Cross.

In the summer of 1966, David Stephenson had been living a quiet life in the town of Jonesboro, Tennessee. (The town hadn't yet reverted to its original colonial spelling, Jonesborough.) The heavyset, balding seventy-four-year-old was a writer and printer and sold a device he had invented to clean type. On a hot June afternoon, Stephenson stepped from his car carrying a basket of fruit for his wife. Before he reached the door of his home, he fell to the ground clutching his chest. His wife Martha rushed out of the house and held him in her arms as he died.

Stephenson was new to Jonesboro, and nobody knew much about his background. But he had married a widow, Martha Murray Sutton, who was well known and highly regarded in the community. Mrs. Stephenson had taught in public schools and in Sunday school at the First Presbyterian Church. Largely out of respect for her, David Stephenson's funeral was attended by many of Jonesboro's most prominent citizens. The mayor of Jonesboro, Lyle Haws, served as a pallbearer, as did future town alderman Jimmy Rhein.

"He was just a very nice person," Rhein recalls. "He was a perfect gentleman and seemed to be very well liked. It just bowled everybody over when that came out years later."

"That" was the secret of David Stephenson's prior life, a secret that no one in town, not even his wife, knew about as they laid Stephenson to rest at the National Cemetery on the grounds of Mountain Home Veterans Administration Center in neighboring Johnson City. David Stephenson had been the leader of the notorious Ku Klux Klan, had virtually controlled the state of Indiana, and had been imprisoned for murder, setting off a scandal that eventually broke the power of the Klan in its most widespread incarnation.

David Curtiss Stephenson was born in Houston on August 21, 1891. He grew up in Maysville, Oklahoma, where as a teenager he acquired a reputation as a "ladies man." He began his career as a printer and newspaperman and got involved in politics as a Socialist, stumping the state for the Socialist candidate for governor, Fred Holt. After Holt's defeat, Stephenson drifted across Oklahoma, picking up work at newspapers and searching for his future. He married Nettie Hamilton in 1915

and became an editor for the *Madill Record*. Soon after his wife informed him they were going to have a baby, Stephenson lost his job and left town, telling his wife he would send for her when he found work. He never did; he kept drifting just beyond her reach, and she finally sued for divorce in 1917. Shortly after that, Stephenson joined the Army. Assigned to officer's training, he got no closer to the fighting than Camp Devins, Massachusetts, and he was honorably discharged as a second lieutenant in February 1919. When discussing his military service later, Stephenson would promote himself to "major."

He landed a job as a traveling salesman for a company that made printing equipment. He met and married Violet Carroll, and in 1920 the newlyweds moved to Evansville, Indiana, where Stephenson soon took a job as a salesman with a coal brokerage firm. He was described as a "super-salesman," well-liked, with an ability to talk to people at all levels of society, and an ability to make friends. Soon he was at the center of a group of young army veterans who wanted to start a fraternal order. Recognizing the potential for profit in such an organization—a percentage of the dues payments along with an interest in the sale of books and manuals, pins, ribbons, and awards—Stephenson threw himself into the project but soon recognized an even greater opportunity with an organization just beginning to make itself known in Indiana.

The Ku Klux Klan originally formed in the wake of the Civil War. Some die-hard Southerners, neo-Confederates, and those whose view of the Civil War comes from *Gone With the Wind* might argue that the Klan was formed to defend the rights of whites in the defeated South and to protect helpless widows and orphans from the depredations of the newly-freed slaves and the Yankee carpetbaggers who encouraged those depredations. Others would assert that the original Klan was a terrorist organization bent on preserving the political power of the Southern aristocracy while denying African Americans their rights as American citizens. In any event, the first incarnation of the Klan flared fiercely but briefly in the defeated Confederate states and had virtually disappeared by the early 1870s.

A second incarnation of the Klan formed in Atlanta in 1915. Directing its efforts exclusively to white Protestants, the new KKK preached "one hundred percent Americanism" and targeted Catholics, Jews, and foreigners more than African Americans. By the early 1920s, the Klan had adopted a businesslike system of recruitment, with a percentage of dues going directly to the recruiter. By presenting itself as an ultra-patriotic and nativist fraternal organization, in favor of Prohibition and opposed to immigrants, Catholics, Jews, and labor unions, the new Klan spread far outside the old Confederacy, with its biggest membership in the Midwest. At its peak in the mid-1920s, an estimated fifteen percent of eligible Americans were members.

Stephenson became a recruiter for the Ku Klux Klan in Indiana and quickly got rich. Starting in Evansville and Vanderburgh County (where an estimated twenty-three percent of the native-born white males joined), he soon moved to Indianapolis and continued recruiting while starting a Klan newspaper, *The Fiery Cross*. In Evansville, Stephenson had tried unsuccessfully to run for Congress as a Democrat. Soon after moving to Indianapolis, he became a Republican. It wasn't long before the Klan controlled the state Republican Party.

Stephenson backed Texas dentist Hiram Evans when Evans unseated founding "Imperial Wizard" William Simmons late in 1922. At a huge Klan rally in Kokomo on the Fourth of July, 1923, Stephenson was named "Grand Dragon" for the state of Indiana. He soon controlled the Klan in twenty-two states, but his power was greatest in his home state. He once boasted, "I am the law in Indiana." He may not have literally been the law, but he certainly had a great deal of influence among the lawmakers. An estimated half of the legislature was controlled by the Klan, as well as many local offices.

Just a few months after being named "Grand Dragon," Stephenson broke with the national Klan and formed his own Klan organization. With only a few exceptions,

JUST A FEW MONTHS AFTER BEING NAMED "GRAND DRAGON," STEPHENSON BROKE WITH THE NATIONAL KLAN AND FORMED HIS OWN CLAN ORGANIZATION.

all the Indiana chapters he had controlled allied with Stephenson's Klan organization. His fellow Klansman, Secretary of State Ed Jackson, ran successfully for governor with Stephenson's backing and took office in January 1925.

Stephenson's second wife obtained a divorce in February 1924, citing "cruelty." He had many amorous encounters with women, some of whom later complained that he was very rough with them, especially when he had been drinking. (Like many prominent supporters of Prohibition, Stephenson did not seem to feel that the law applied to him.) At least one woman complained that Stephenson had bitten her. By the time of the new governor's inaugural, Stephenson had taken up with a twenty-eight-year-old state employee, Madge Oberholtzer, who was apparently flattered by the attentions of such a powerful figure.

On the evening of Sunday, March 15, 1925, Stephenson invited Oberholtzer to his home. She later claimed he forced her to take a couple of drinks, which affected her strongly and made her nauseated. Along with some of Stephenson's aides, they boarded a train bound for Chicago. In a private compartment, Stephenson attacked Oberholtzer, who later stated, "I did not know and do not remember all that happened. He chewed me all over my body, bit my neck and face, chewing my tongue, chewing my breasts until they bled, my back, my legs, my ankles, and mutilated me all over my body."

The party left the train before it got to Chicago, disembarking in Hammond, Indiana, where they checked into a hotel. In the morning, Oberholtzer asked Stephenson for some money to buy a hat and some cosmetics. Instead of buying cosmetics, she bought a box of mercury chloride tablets at a drugstore. Dissolved in water, mercury chloride was commonly used as a disinfectant. Oberholtzer swallowed a half dozen of the tablets and became violently ill.

Stephenson, Oberholtzer, and two bodyguards drove back to Indianapolis on Monday evening, and one of the bodyguards took the desperately ill young woman home on Tuesday. According to the family attorney, Madge Oberholtzer told her mother, "I'm done for." When the attorney asked who had made the bite marks on her body, she replied, "Stephenson."

Oberholtzer didn't die right away; she lingered for nearly a month—long enough for her attorney to get her statement about what had happened to her. Doctors weren't as concerned about the mercury poisoning, which could cause kidney failure, as they were about the staph infection caused by the bites. In those days before antibiotics, infection was often fatal.

David Stephenson was arrested and charged with kidnapping and assault. When Madge Oberholtzer died on April 14, the charge became murder. The only defense his lawyers put forth was that the young woman had died by her own hand by taking mercury; prosecutors argued that infection from the bites was the cause of death. In a highly-publicized trial, Stephenson's two accomplices were acquitted, but Stephenson was found guilty of second-degree murder and sentenced to life in prison.

He did not testify at his trial. Later he claimed that he feared for his life after having been threatened by the Klan. Others felt his lawyers kept him off the stand to prevent potentially damaging cross-examination. And it is likely that Stephenson thought his good friend, Governor Ed Jackson, would pardon him. But no pardon was forthcoming, and as Stephenson realized his fellow Klansman was abandoning him, he began talking to the newspapers.

The resulting scandal caused several officials to resign. The mayor of Indianapolis was convicted of bribery and served thirty days in jail. Governor Jackson was spared a prison term due to a technicality, served out the remainder of his term, and dropped out of political life altogether. The power of the Klan in Indiana, and across the nation, was broken and membership dropped to almost nothing. *The Indianapolis Times* won a Pulitzer Prize for its reporting on Klan corruption in Indiana.

Stephenson later claimed he had been framed by officials under the influence of Klansmen loyal to Hiram Evans, and that Oberholtzer died as the result of a botched abortion. Testimony in Stephenson's trial revealed that death from swallowing a relatively low amount of mercury chloride was rare. However, mercury chloride was often used as a douche to induce abortion, and fatalities were more common in those cases. Researchers have found evidence that could support Stephenson's claims of a frame-up. In any event, he remained in prison until he was paroled in 1950. He promptly broke parole by leaving the state, was arrested in Minneapolis, and sentenced to serve ten more years. He was paroled again in 1956, moved to Seymour, Indiana, and married his third wife, Martha Dickinson.

In 1961, Stephenson was arrested in Independence, Missouri, and charged with attempting to molest a sixteen-year-old girl. He paid a $300 fine and returned to his wife in Seymour. But in 1962 he

left Indiana, never to return. The following year he came to the V.A. Center in Johnson City for medical treatment and settled in Jonesboro.

"He married the woman that was my fifth-grade schoolteacher," says Jim Rhein. Martha Murray was from an old, respected family in Jonesboro. She was widowed from a man named Sutton when she met Stephenson. "She was a really good person—taught school most of her life. He breezed into town sometime in the early 1960s. They met, had a little courtship. They seemed to hit it off and got married," Rhein recalls. The new Mrs. Stephenson knew nothing about her new husband's infamous past, including the fact that he was still legally married to the former Martha Dickinson.

"He got her a new car and took care of her," Rhein remembers. "He was a very courtly gentleman, very nice to be around. He liked to take a drink every now and then; he liked a little Tennessee sippin' whiskey." Rhein can't recollect for certain, but he believes Stephenson wrote a newspaper story on the death of Rhein's father. Stephenson did some writing for the Jonesboro *Herald and Tribune*, but for the most part he was at least semi-retired.

Stephenson's grave at Mountain Home National Cemetery. Photo courtesy Charlie Warden.

The truth about Stephenson's past didn't come out until sometime after his death. A reporter for the *Louisville Courier-Journal* was writing about Stephenson's reign over the Indiana Klan and tracked him to Jonesborough. Rhein remembers the people of Jonesborough were "shocked and surprised" to learn the facts and were also protective of his widow "because she was such a sweet, nice person." Mrs. Stephenson was certainly surprised and embarrassed to learn of her late husband's past. "But I do know this," Rhein asserts. "She knew he liked her and was good to her. He bought her a new car, and they liked to go places and socialize, and have people in to visit. I think she enjoyed all that. I know it was better than being lonely and not having anyone."

Whatever David Stevenson had been in his life, for the last few years of that life he was apparently a devoted husband and a respected, well-liked member of the community. He served more years in prison than most people convicted of even more serious crimes; by nearly any measure, his debt to society had been paid. Perhaps he was entitled to enjoy his last few years in relative quiet. But the secrets of his reign over the notorious Invisible Empire, and the roles played by prominent politicians and others, were buried with him in a veterans cemetery. ❖

Wayne Winkler is the author of *Walking Toward the Sunset: The Melungeons of Appalachia*, published by Mercer University Press.

Good Enough for Me

Margaret Nava

Pam and Leroy Johnson's home in the 1970s. Photo courtesy author.

Pam and Leroy Johnson lived in the old Stringtown post office about a mile down the road from our farm near Spencer, West Virginia. The rundown one-room structure had no indoor plumbing, and only a single light bulb hung from the ceiling, but the Johnsons and their five children always seemed happy.

Pam and I became friends when some of the ladies in our hollow got together to sew new curtains for the old Stringtown church. The church, like Pam and Leroy's house, dated back to the early 1900s when the lumber industry was in its heyday in West Virginia. At one time, Hippies had laid claim to the property, but when the going got tough and the squatters moved out, everyone decided to fix up the old building and re-establish it as a church. Pam's husband and a couple of other men repaired the broken windows, repainted the exterior, and built simple benches for the interior. The women, of course, did all the rest.

When all the scrapping, scrubbing, and polishing were finished, several of the ladies, myself included, decided to hold a sewing bee to make curtains for the church. Two days before the sewing bee, two of the women went into town, purchased a bolt of cotton lace fabric from the general store, and cut the fabric into panels for the church windows. All that had to be done was sew a rod pocket at the top of each panel and hem the bottom. However, since we'd decided to hold the sewing bee at the non-electrified church, all of the sewing had to be done by hand. The following Saturday we gathered together and got to work.

Having never been proficient with a sewing needle, I must have looked like I needed help because Pam sidled up next to me and started showing me what to do. Working side by side, we began to talk, and after learning the names of all her children and their favorite pets, I got up the nerve to ask how she and her family had come to live in a one-time post office.

"It's not so unusual," said Pam. "Lots of people live in cast-off buildings. See, West Virginia has always had a lot of trees and back in my Great-Granmaw's day someone decided to start cutting them down for money. For a while the loggers just cut trees that were easy to get to, but once those were gone, they started cutting the ones in the hollows."

"All the way back here?" Knowing the difficulty I had driving in and out of the hollow, I wondered how that would have been possible.

"Sure, all the really big trees grew up on the ridges where they got lots of rain and sunshine. But the only way to get to the trees on the ridges was to go through the hollows. There weren't any real roads back then, and it took the workers a long time to get into the hollows, so the logging companies built tent camps so the men could stay for three or four weeks at a time. The men in this hollow called their camp Stringtown because of all the string they used to hold the tents down. Seems to me a better name would have been Ropetown, but what do I know? Anyway, when all the men living in those tents started complaining about being away from their families, the company built real houses—the kind that wouldn't collapse or get blown away in a storm. Of course, once they built the houses, they had to build a store, a school, post office, and this church. Somewhere along the way, they even built a big boarding house complete with a fancy dining room and saloon. Back in its day, Stringtown was quite a boom town."

"That's amazing. But, without roads, how'd the logging company get the trees out?"

"They floated them down the river."

"You're kidding."

Pam frowned. "Why would I kid about a thing like that? From what my Paw told me, the logging company had sawmills set up downstream and once those trees were floated downriver, they were stripped, cut, and loaded onto railcars that took them to market."

"Sounds like a good business. What went wrong?"

"When the Depression hit back in the '30s, a lot of logging companies went under. Sawmills shut down and railroad tracks were ripped out."

"What about all the families living in the logging camps?"

"Some stayed, some didn't. My Great-Granpaw had worked for the lumber company but when it went belly up, he didn't want to uproot his family, so he paid the back taxes that were owed on his house and just stayed put. For a while, everything was like it had been from the beginning, but, one by one, the store, the school, and even the boardinghouse shut down and the buildings were abandoned."

"How did your great grandfather support his family?"

"The usual ways. He hunted, planted crops, raised animals, and, of course, he bartered."

"Bartered? You mean like traded?"

"Sure. No one in Stringtown had any money, so if someone needed something someone else had, he traded something he had so he could get what he wanted. Both sides got something out of the deal and everyone went home happy."

"Why didn't he just move his family to town?"

"My Great-Granpaw was set in his ways. Stringtown was his home and he wasn't about to move to the city. When his kids grew up and started families of their own, they bought up and moved into some of the other empty buildings. Back then, family stayed together. My Mamaw and Papaw lived in the old saloon and their oldest son, my Paw, lived in the post office. Paw mined coal and when he died of the black lung, his house passed to me. Me and my family have been there ever since."

"But wouldn't you like to live in a real house? You know...with plumbing?"

"What for? We got a roof over our heads, an outhouse up the hill, and the river is close enough that we can jump in whenever we need a bath. If it was good enough for my family, it's good enough for me."

Pam's story got me to thinking. Over the years, many different industries had started up in Appalachia. Salt and coal were mined, trees were harvested, oil was found, railroad tracks were laid, and dams were constructed. Some of these industries proved beneficial for the people living in this remote, mountainous region; others did not. While there were those who made vast amounts of money and built large, palatial homes, there were others who struggled to provide safe shelters for their families.

Pam told me that her home was more than just a house. The land, the people, even the trees and animals all had special meaning for her and her family before her. Stringtown was a place where children were born and raised, where holidays were celebrated, where crops were grown and harvested, where families made lasting memories. She talked about playing with her cousins, fishing in the creek, walking barefoot in the mud, and spending time with her grandparents, aunts, and uncles. True, Pam's house may not have had running water or electricity, but it had love. And for Pam Johnson, that was good enough. ❖

Margaret Nava is a regular contributor to *Now & Then*. She is the author of two New Mexico travel guides and three novels.

Steve Earle
& The Dukes (and Duchesses)
The Low Highway
New West Records

On his fifteenth studio album since *Guitar Town*, his 1986 debut, Steve Earle surveys an American landscape of empty houses, deserted factories, broken cities, and damaged people. The homeless protagonist of "Invisible," the meth cookers and prison inmates of "Calico County," and the Wal-Mart arsonist of "Burnin' It Down" are portrayed with Earle's trademark empathy for the underdog. That, combined with powerful backing from Earle's current band, makes *The Low Highway* Earle's most satisfying work since 2004's *The Revolution Starts...Now*. For the current incarnation of The Dukes (and Duchesses), longtime bassist and drummer Kelly Looney and Will Rigby are joined by Steve's wife Allison Moorer and the husband-wife team of Chris Masterson and Eleanor Whitmore, who, as The Mastersons, will open many shows on the current tour. They provide instrumental depth and stylistic variety, from the jazzy "Pocket Full of Rain" to the rollicking bluegrass of "Warren Hellman's Banjo" to the mandolin and guitar duel in "Down the Road Pt. II." Earle's recent tenure on the HBO series *Treme* brings us "Love's Gonna Blow My Way" and "After Mardi Gras," co-written for the show with co-star Lucia Micarelli. The hurricane-defying "That All You Got?" was performed by Micarelli and the Red Stick Ramblers on the third season premier of *Treme*. As the album draws to a close, "21st Century Blues" sums up the disappointment of baby boomers raised to believe in a future portrayed by Tomorrowland ("No man on the moon, nobody on Mars / Where the hell is my flying car?") and visionaries ("Ain't the way the Maharishi said it would be."), but concluding optimistically that "Maybe the future's just waiting on you and me." That future is clearly on Earle's mind for the final song, "Remember Me," a bittersweet message to his youngest child, John Henry Earle, born in 2010 when Earle was fifty-five. Facing the likelihood that he won't see his son grow to manhood, Earle can only make the most of the time they have, building a memory to sustain his child through sunny days and stormy nights of his own low highway. ❖

Nora Jane Struthers
& The Party Line
Carnival
Blue Pig Music

Nora Jane Struthers compares the songs on her new CD to a carnival. "When you go to a carnival, you go into a sideshow tent, and on every stage you find a different person with a different story. That's what I'm trying to do with this album—craft vignettes, and in some cases more developed narratives, about imaginary people's lives." The former English teacher proves to be an adept storyteller on this follow-up to her 2010 debut. Struthers' roots are in traditional American music; her father Alan is a bluegrass musician, and Nora Jane made her recording debut with him as a duo called Dirt Road Sweetheart. Her eponymous solo release, featuring top-flight backing from multi-instrumentalist Tim O'Brien and fiddler Stuart Duncan, won praise from critics. *Carnival* marks the recording debut of her touring band, The Party Line, which includes Struthers' longtime collaborator P. J. George (upright bass, harmony vocals, pedal steel guitar, accordion, and banjo), Joe Overton (clawhammer banjo and harmony vocals), Aaron Jonah Lewis (fiddle, three-finger banjo, baritone fiddle, mandolin) and Drew Lawhorn (drums). The addition of drums moves Struthers' music into a more progressive realm. "I'm trying to bring [the storytelling] element of traditional music forward into a contemporary sonic space," she says. "I want story-songs to live on in a way that will be accessible to more people." The result is a collection of musical stories reflecting a female perspective. "I was able to arrange them chronologically, as

teenagers, then women, then old women. The album has a narrative, from girlhood to death." *Carnival* provides a fourteen-song blueprint on how to bring traditional American musical forms into the twenty-first century. ❖

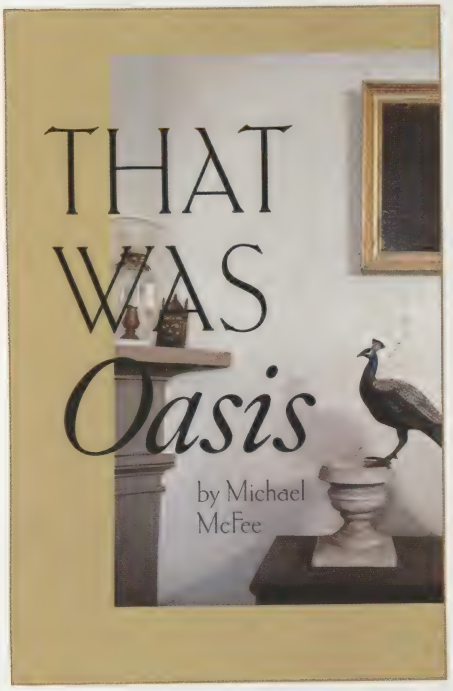
Holly Williams
The Highway
Georgiana Records

As the granddaughter of Hank Williams, the daughter of Hank, Jr., and the half-sister of Hank III, Holly Williams seems fated to go into the music business. Following her critically-acclaimed first release in 2006, she toured throughout the United States and Europe. But that Hank Williams legend is a dark one, and a near-fatal car crash in 2006 injured her arm. Unsure if she would be able to play guitar, she briefly considered a career change. But her second album in 2009 was considered by some to be among the best releases of the year. Her third studio album was finished last August. Titled *Railroads*, the artwork was done and the songs mastered, but Williams felt something was missing. She wrote and recorded "The Highway" and "Letting You Go," completing the album that was renamed *The Highway*. Released on the Georgiana label owned by Williams and her husband, guitarist Chris Coleman, *The Highway* is rooted in Americana like her previous work. But co-producer Charlie Peacock took an organic approach to the sound of this disc, a less-is-more aesthetic that allows the natural sound of the instruments to build a foundation for Williams' smoky vocals. And the granddaughter of Ol' Hank knows how to write and sing about heartbreak and regret. Just listen to the ironically-titled "Happy." Backing vocals from guests like Jackson Browne, Jakob Dylan, Gwyneth Paltrow, and Dierks Bentley don't overshadow Williams but are used to great effect. The closing cut, "Waiting on June," tracks a love story from childhood to old age and the building of family traditions. Holly Williams is honoring her own family's unique traditions by creating music of this fine quality. ❖

Stillhouse
The Great Reprise
Vella Recordings

The band Stillhouse came together in Raleigh, North Carolina, in the late 1990s, performing a 1970s-inspired repertoire of original songs reminiscent of The Band and Buffalo Springfield. The members of the band went on to other projects. Lead singer and songwriter Dave Wilson and steel guitarist/pianist Greg Readling formed Chatham County Line, while bassist Jay Brown went on the road with Tift Merritt. But they maintained Stillhouse. Tift Merritt's husband Zeke Hutchins began playing drums for Stillhouse in 2000, and with the addition of singer/songwriter/guitarist Johnny Irion, the band recorded *Through The Winter* in 2005. The touring and recording schedules of Chatham County Line and Tift Merritt didn't leave much time for a follow-up release, but in 2011 Wilson, Readling, Brown, and Hutchins managed to get a week together to work on some songs Wilson had set aside over the years. They brought instruments and microphones to Konnarock, Virginia, where they knew the owner of the old General Store. The musicians moved shelves, swept floors, and created a studio space. The music was recorded live with minimal overdubs, and the ten tracks on *The Great Reprise* have a warm, close feel. Released on vinyl with accompanying CD, *The Great Reprise* sounds like music that we originally heard on LPs. Wilson continues to channel that '70s aura with songs that sound like they could have been outtakes from Music from Big Pink. ❖

Wayne Winkler is music editor for *Now & Then*.



***That Was* Oasis**
Michael McFee
Carnegie Mellon University Press
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 2012
88 pages, paperbound, $15.95

In his new collection, Michael McFee conjures "worlds that others can also enter." Anh Bui's book design itself entices. On the cover, a peacock grasps the edge of an urn to stand facing the corner of a mantel. In the upper right of this cover photo is a framed painting so dark as to first appear empty, but at cover's edge, there seems to be something in the painting about to come into view. Two cracks in the elegant white wall have guided our eyes toward this painting. Turning the book over, we see another section of the painting that suggests landscape. Then there's the enigma of the title, the last word of its three-words, Oasis, italicized. Is it for the word itself or for the title of the painting?

From the first poem, we are drawn into another world: "Q" is a clever treatise on the letter itself, and more. And in "Erasures," the poet's redefinitions employ images similar to Old English verse's kennings, a figurative, compound expression in place of a name or noun, as in "bird's joy" for sky and as in "Erasures," when McFee labels the fine dottle left by erasure marks "changed mind's detritus, second thought's debris, / revision's residue."

In McFee's poetic oases of past and present, many objects open us up to the significance of bygone days of family as well as place—things that were often seen in those past times in a very different light. The poems hold these special objects up as marvels, sacred links between us and loved ones and the almost lost and gone, with titles such as "Salt," "Cigarette Urn," "Old Newspaper Clipping in an Old Novel," "Pork Skins," and "Handful of Keys." In one such poem, "The Copperhead," the poet compares a grandmother's matter-of-fact killing of snakes startled out of cover by explosions for a mountain tunnel with his own overkill of a copperhead in his driveway. Down the page, his narrow lines work visually and directly toward the reader.

In "Oasis," section three of this six-part collection, McFee makes triple use of italics. Oasis is possibly the title for the painting that first transports the speaker into its world—

> where an unveiled beauty
> waited with water,
> calmly lifting a bowl
> to my cracked lips

—and possibly used for emphasis in speaking, as in the last line: "that was oasis." Finally, it may represent the word itself, full of import.

Also among McFee's worlds is the paean to pianist Thelonius Monk and writer A.R. Ammons that dominates the fourth section of this book. In "Thelonius and Archie," the poet recreates a world revolving around the overlapping "spheres" of a jazz legend and a famous poet who were "creating worlds that others can also enter" in their native North Carolina in the mid-twentieth century.

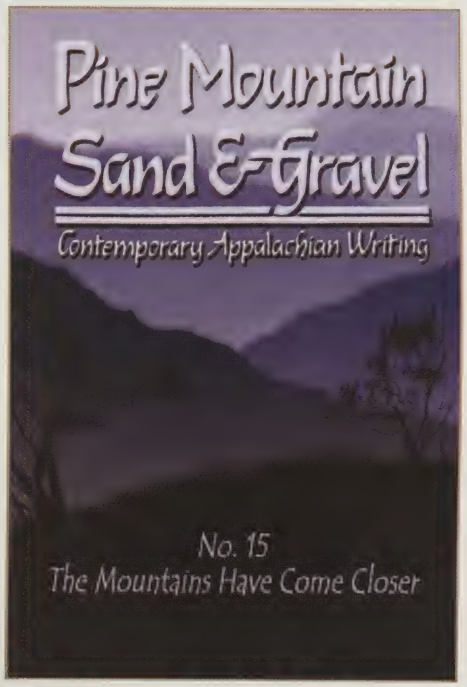
Section five, the shortest section of the book, contains "Hydrotherapeutical," one of my favorite poems of the collection. As reader, I enjoy resting in the rhythmic flow of the words, like the speaker of the poem in his Jacuzzi, in a "trippy" drowse, the play of images and association wafting over me.

Making clear the need for numbered sections, the entire final section of *That Was* Oasis is a twenty-seven-part poem called "McCormick Field," a famous baseball field in the poet's hometown, Asheville. In this long poem, McFee's sense of place becomes

most intense and autobiographical as he weaves incidents he and his father shared over years with the characters of the ballpark and with the park itself. For this reviewer, each part of this tribute poem is able to stand on its own, no part reading like a mere bridge to the one that follows—an accomplishment in any long poem.

This marvelous new collection of Michael McFee's may be trusted again and again to engage and entertain. It serves as a lush and refreshing oasis for all to enter. ❖

Ron Houchin is a retired public school teacher, raised in Huntington, West Virginia. He has published five books of poetry.



Pine Mountain Sand & Gravel—The Mountains Have Come Closer
Pauletta Hansel and Michael Henson, editors
Wind Publications
Nicholasville, Kentucky, 2012
104 pages, paperback, $12.00

Pine Mountain Sand & Gravel is a themed annual publication of the Southern Appalachian Writers Cooperative, "whose mission is to encourage, support, and publicize the work of members and friends." The publication reviewed here takes as its theme the title of Appalachian poet Jim Wayne Miller's book *The Mountains Have Come Closer*, published in 1980 by the Appalachian Consortium Press.

The editors present the opening poem "America" by Jim Webb, poet and founding editor of *PMS&G*, as a "bridge" from the *America* volume to this one, a startlingly appropriate choice. In the poem, missing and decaying teeth ("Some have gone, gone forever. / Coke bottle, Dairy Queen, popsicle, / Chewing gum, Milky Way, Forever Yours / Rot.") symbolize the "gaps," "rot," and "holes" in the contemporary American way of life caused (most recently) by two decades of Wall Street's excesses that nearly drove the nation into another Great Depression in October of 2008.

Webb's symbol resonates deeply in "A Common Enemy," the brief prose selection by Jennifer Barton that follows "America." Barton sets out in violent and precise detail how mountaintop removal coal mining, with its extreme technology of "heavy explosives and monster machinery," accompanied by "enormous trucks," "noise and grief" is destroying the physical and biological foundation of "deep Appalachia," blasting gaps and holes in the ancient landscape and in the generational harmony of Appalachian families. As the lines in Thomas Keats McKnight's poem, "The Aftermath," say: "Ridgelines forever changed . . . . Neighbors and families pitted against one another."

The tone of the writing in this collection alternates between irony and elegy, and this, too, is appropriate. The closer one is to the mountains the more acutely one is aware of the tragedy now taking place. As "the mountains have come closer," there is tragic irony in seeing them disappear, in the coalfields at least, at the hands of "the common enemy."

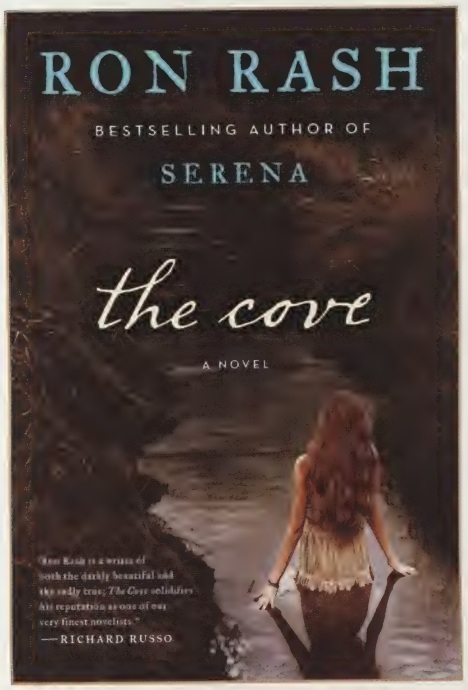
Irony and satire are key features of the anti-lyric bitterly and brilliantly presented in Scott Goebel's "Fiends of Coal Press Release." That's fiends, not friends, and the message to migrant Appalachians is that "there is little need to return to the coal fields," since "our corporate community has been sending the mountains TO you by barge, rail and truck . . ." in order to bring good things to life in urban and suburban communities.

The elegiac is prominent in the lines of Charlie Hughes' "Lament for Mountains": "The mountains have come / to darkness /....and there is no whisper / of water / from ephemeral streams, / nor any owl or whippoorwill calling / in the dark." And also in Elaine Maria Upton's "The Finality of a Mountain" with its plaintive lines: "Things seem finalized / mountain-top-cropped / burned. / Every valley is my

grandmother's grave / . . . . Somewhere a hill howls. But who can hear / the heave of its heavy unhoused throat?"

Rhonda Pettit's poem "The Calling" says, "Fearing depths / it is hard to listen to mountains, to answer them." But some Appalachians are listening, and there is hope in the clarity of understanding evident in the crafted work of this collective tribute to the mountains. ❖

P.J. Laska's essays and poems appear in journals, such as *Left Curve*, and in anthologies including *Coal: A Poetry Anthology*. His most recent books are *Night and Day* and *The Original Wisdom of the Dao De Jing*.



The Cove
Ron Rash
Harper Collins
New York, 2012
272 pages, cloth, $25.99

Just when many of us thought Ron Rash had taken his Appalachian noir novels to the limit with *Serena*, he comes back with not only a "topper" but a genre-bender. *The Cove*, like his previous fiction, is set in the mountains of western North Carolina. While this story is a page-turner "mountain mystery" with a "western" episode, much of it is written in a softer tone, a slower pace. It's a love story.

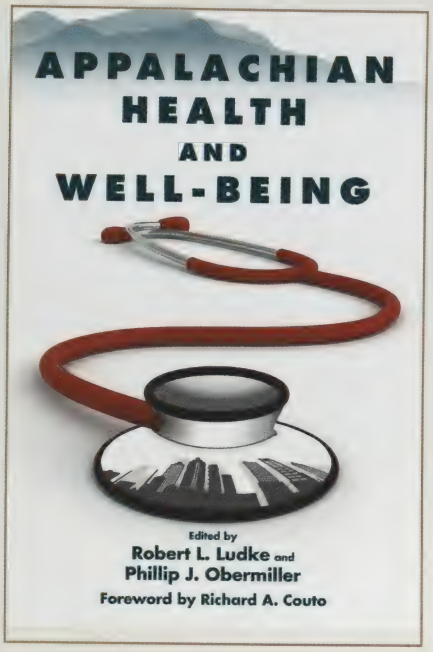
Rash has written a lovely, sensitive tale. In *The Cove* his "new" tone and the storyline are consistent throughout, including the symbolically imaginative naming of his characters: Laurel Shelton (a reversal of Shelton Laurel), Ledbetter, Weatherbee, Bettingfield. And first names: Doak, Slidell, Tillman, Boyce, Jubel. An Appalachian chorus line of characters adds its own patina to this World War I version of *Romeo & Juliet*.

A young woman (Laurel), isolated in a remote cove that is "nothing but shadow land" on the outskirts of Mars Hill, North Carolina, and who is considered by local townsfolk to be a witch, comes across a drifter camped out on the family land. When a haunting flute melody wafts through the woods from a rock outcropping above the family farm, she goes to search out the music's source. (Rash later describes the stranger's flute music: "It wasn't so much a soaring sound but something on the song's surface, like a water strider skimming over a creek pool.") While Rash puts off the meeting of the two main characters with a tantalizingly deft touch, when the two finally do meet it is love at first sight—at least for Laurel, whose prospects for marriage and a helpmate to keep up the old mountain farm are nearly nonexistent. The drifter turns out to be an escapee from a World War I internment camp for German prisoners in Hot Springs, something that Laurel and her brother don't find out until the end of the book when Rash shifts gears and the book becomes "a mountain western" complete with a local saloon, posses and search parties, lawmen and outlaws, and, of course, corn liquor.

Rash's language is purer and more poetic than in earlier novels. His "touch" is softer, more finely honed. Using local language and restrained libido, Rash's telling is reminiscent of Shakespeare. "He's already tallied my gone hand against me," Laurel's brother Hank says, explaining to himself his future father-in-law's attitude toward his upcoming marriage. When it is revealed that the stranger is mute, Laurel remarks: "Not being able to talk . . . I'd think it could make you feel a lavish of aloneness."

In this book Ron Rash has given us yet another mountain classic. ❖

Thomas Crowe lives beside the Tuckasegee River in western North Carolina. His books include *Zoro's Field: My Life in the Appalachian Woods*, *The End of Eden: Writings of an Environmental Activist*, and, most recently, *Crack Light*, a poetry collection.



Appalachian Health and Well-Being
Edited by Robert L. Ludke and Phillip J. Obermiller
Lexington, Kentucky
University Press of Kentucky, 2012
386 pages, cloth, $50

Obermiller and Ludke have both contributed enough to Appalachian studies to rest on their laurels, so they are to be commended for gathering and publishing scholarship in a sparse area of national attention and breaking a path for the scholarship that will follow as public health pervades and finally comes into its own within Appalachian studies.

As a whole, this book points out where "the continuing connection between health and justice" (as Richard Couto names it in his foreword) has strengthened, where it has weakened, and where it is unchanged. The "Historical Background" should be required reading for every college student entering Appalachian public health. It is succinct but not simplistic, offering names, places, and concepts to be explored more thoroughly. Likewise the editors' argument regarding "local culture" encapsulates a difficult concept that has fueled many a post-conference bar brawl, into a straightforward depiction of how "culture" has been applied and misapplied to "25 million people living in 13 states."

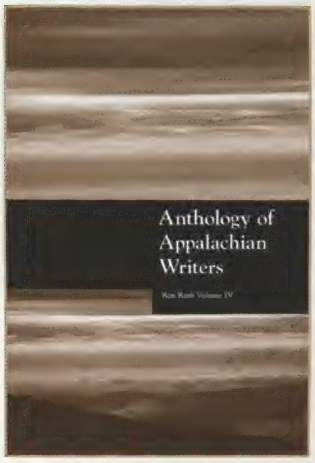
It is inevitable that a volume containing sixteen chapters by more than thirty authors will be a mixed bag. The statistics used in some essays are older than availability would dictate. In others ("Mental Health," for example), long-standing problems are not only outlined with history but given up-to-date commentary and future predictions. The chapter on the fragmentation of the health care system is pure collaborative deep knowledge, pooled for common good. Its descriptive analysis should be required reading for every do-gooder arriving in Appalachia and all students in clinical and public health administration (including medical information systems), nursing, and social work.

The book is divided into three sections: Part One is "Appalachian Determinants of Health" (four chapters); Part Two is "Appalachian Health Status" (nine chapters); Part Three is "Urban Appalachian Health" (three chapters). Graduate students in public health working in the region, particularly if coming from elsewhere, should be required to read Part One, and clinical professionals, Part Two. The chapters in Part Two on specific issues or diseases work well as primers, offering "jumping in" points for every medical or sociological specialist. This is particularly true of the chapter on substance abuse.

The scholars writing these chapters are not united within themselves—something one would expect from any assembly of experts. Theories range from gene pools to explain why inhabitants may have higher prevalence of some illnesses, to assertions that Appalachians are a non-homogenous group in culture and genetics. The policy recommendations that end each chapter are sometimes so obvious, yet unattainable, they could have come from the end of a fairy godmother's wand; others are so pragmatic and clearly defined that one wants to march out the door and begin.

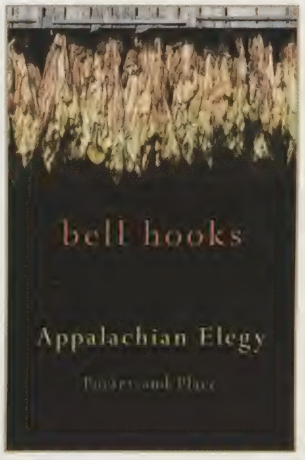
In a field that has very little scholarship, the delicate dance of Appalachian public health with policy, politics, medicine, and sociology is depicted here by those who have dedicated their academic careers to particular fields: Mark Dignan in cancer, Sharon Denham in diabetes, and Bruce Behringer in policy advocacy, to name a few. Such dedication and knowledge shine through the essays devoted to these topics. And among *Appalachian Health and Well-Being*'s contributions is the fact that it was published in the first place, putting rungs into a ladder built by Appalachian scholars who understand the nuances and subtleties within a non-nation-state that may be neither gene pool nor culture yet could be defined simultaneously as both. A delicate dance indeed, done well in this volume. ❖

Wendy Welch is the Executive Director of the Graduate Medical Education Consortium and Area Health Education Center of Southwest Virginia (based at UVA Wise) and serves as Interim Director for the Southwest Virginia Health Authority.



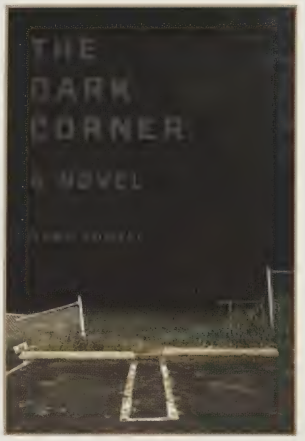
Anthology of Appalachian Writers, Volume IV: Ron Rash
Sylvia Shurbutt, Charlotte Henning, David Hoffman, Natalie Sypolt, and Stephanie Robins, editors
(Shepherd University Press, 2012)

This fourth annual anthology in a series offering poems, stories, essays, and photographs honors Ron Rash, the 2012 recipient of Shepherd University's Appalachian Heritage Writer's Award. (The first three anthologies featured award-winners Adriana Trigiani, Bobbie Ann Mason, and Silas House.) The collection also pays tribute to poet Ethan Fischer and West Virginia Public Radio personality "Johnny Dime, the Poet of Crime." Fischer died in June 2011. In addition to several of his poems are remembrances of him by other authors, such as Grace Cavalieri. Readers of Appalachian literature will recognize many contributors to this collection—among them West Virginia's poet laureate, Marc Harshman; Anna Egan Smucker, well-known for her children's books; and Willa Cather, whose excerpt from *Sapphira and the Slave Girl*, reflects this famous author's Appalachian heritage. The works by new or relatively unknown authors hold pleasant surprises, especially Jim Koenig's story, "Carry Me to the River." Set in Harpers Ferry, his haunting tale contributes to the rich literary heritage of that historic locale. ❖



Appalachian Elegy: Poetry and Place
bell hooks
(University Press of Kentucky, 2012)

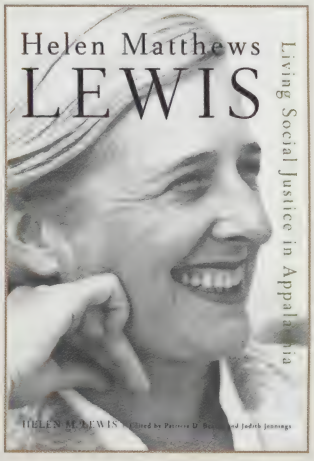
Famous as an outspoken and astute cultural critic, bell hooks is one of this generation's best-known intellectuals. In Appalachian Elegy, she turns her sensibilities and creativity to poetry about Kentucky, her home state. These poems, in their solemn tone, create a kind of incantation. They don't just mourn, however. They advise and witness, elegizing Appalachia but not giving up on it. Historical and contemporary troubles—slavery, war, racism, poverty, mountaintop removal—fill these pages. Yet they're also replete with the beauty and traditions we associate with Kentucky—wild roses, bears, turkey, horse races, quilts, and habits of "making do" with little. Contrasting with these familiar subjects is hooks's original use of grammar to achieve an effect of community and of the immediate. She dispenses with punctuation and capitalization in aesthetic choices that argue for naturalness, community, and openness to wonder. ❖



The Dark Corner
Mark Powell
(University of Tennessee Press, 2012)

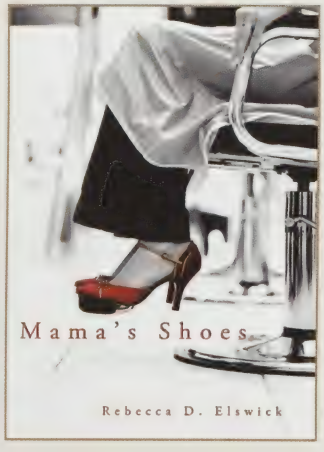
How many ways can flesh be mortified? This thought-provoking novel explores many of them, with a seriousness that offers little quarter. The story's hero, Malcolm, leaves the priesthood—after having his girlfriend's son shock him with a car battery as he hangs on a cross in front of his congregation and after drinking anti-freeze in a suicide attempt. Returning home to the mountains of South Carolina, he tries to build a life with his family and with Jordan, a woman addicted to drugs. He and Jordan stay together for awhile, and they bring some

comfort to his father, who is dying of cancer. But Jordan, full of despair and self-loathing, leaves Malcolm and returns to live with a man who supplies her with drugs—and sexual exploitation. Malcolm's Uncle Tillman, so grotesque as to seem allegorical, illustrates another extreme of mortification. Too obese to get out of his chair, Tillman sits naked, producing urine, excrement, and inspirational text messages. Somebody has visited evil on the world, and there are bad guys aplenty in this novel. But the bad guys don't account for the multi-layered, pervasive horror. They, along with Malcolm's congregation, his family, and his girlfriend, are subjects of a larger evil. ❖



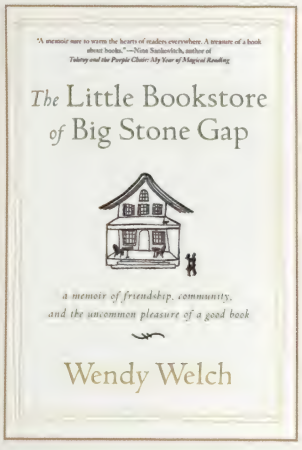
Helen Matthews Lewis: Living Social Justice in Appalachia
Helen M. Lewis, edited by Patricia Beaver and Judith Jenning (University Press of Kentucky, 2012)

A Labor member of Parliament, Hywel Francis, calls Lewis "a very modern Mother Jones." Appalachian scholar Stephen Fisher calls her an "unruly" woman who has been and continues to be influential in social justice efforts here and abroad. Lewis has spent a lifetime advocating for social justice for workers, people of color, women, and for the poor in Appalachia and elsewhere. A pioneer in the field of Appalachian studies, she held leadership roles early on in its development, including at the Highlander Research and Education Center and at Appalshop. This book is a community of sorts, constituted by Lewis's own words—interview excerpts and selections from her papers and publications—and the accounts of colleagues, fellow activists, and others whose lives she has affected. Near the end of the book, Lewis tells young people who want to work for a better world, "You just have to look for opportunities where you can create a little trouble, to make changes where you are." Readers of this book will surely wish her many more years of trouble-making. ❖



Mama's Shoes
Rebecca D. Elswick (Abbott Press, 2012)

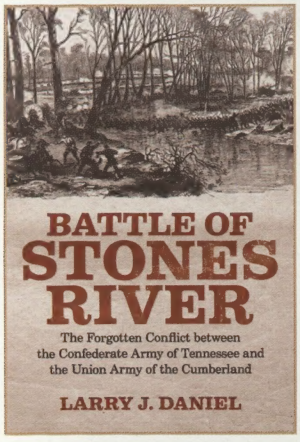
In the prologue to this novel, readers meet Sylvia, sixteen years old, ready to get married, and looking forward to starting a new life far away from Coal Valley, where she was born and raised. The story proper opens in 1955, fifteen years later, with Sassy, Sylvia's teenage daughter, and we learn where Sylvia's life has led—back home. She's a war widow, beautician, and mother of a teenage girl. This mother-daughter story, told mostly through the voices of Sassy and Sylvia, explores their problematic relationship with humor and sympathy. The last chapter, set in 1960, forms a kind of epilogue. Sylvia is getting ready to marry for the second time, and Sassy is getting ready to go off to college. With its focus on loving relationships, *Mama's Shoes* is what some would call a "feel good" story, hopeful in tone and bountiful in a belief in people at their best. ❖


The Little Bookstore of Big Stone Gap
a memoir of friendship, community, and the uncommon pleasure of a good book
Wendy Welch

The Little Bookstore of Big Stone Gap: A Memoir of Friendship, Community, and the Uncommon Pleasure of a Good Book
Wendy Welch (St. Martin's Press, 2012)

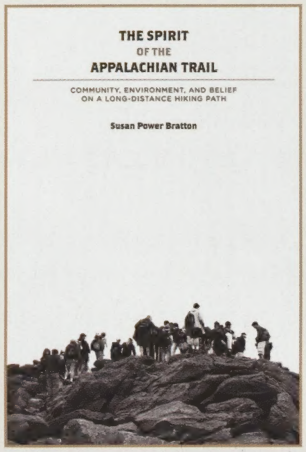
Much as I like nonfiction books, I wouldn't describe many as "page-turners." But Welch's fresh, funny, and savvy account of her and her husband's adventures

starting and running a bookstore in a little town in Virginia is so entertaining that even people uninterested in bookstores or little towns in Virginia are still likely to enjoy her book. From the opening scene's flashing blue lights and police sirens at three o'clock in the morning through chapters about friends and customers, including a veteran who buys scores of westerns but doesn't know how to read, Welch kept me in her (usually) gentle clutches. Not just entertaining, her memoir includes observations on what it means to be part of a small-town community in Southern Appalachia, the economic realities of book-buying and -selling today, the ethics of how we do business with each other, and the importance of how we measure success. ❖



Battle of Stones River
Larry J. Daniel
(Louisiana State University Press, 2012)

The Battle of Stones River, December 31, 1862, to January 2, 1863, ended in a draw, with heavy casualties on both sides and with both sides in retreat. According to Daniel, this inconclusive battle was, nevertheless, one of the Civil War's most decisive ones. In an engaging style and with a narrative grounded in scholarly research, he describes the politics and personalities that played key roles in events leading up to the battle and affecting its outcome: Union General William Rosecrans' withdrawal of his troops from the bank of the river and Confederate General Braxton Bragg's call for retreat of his troops in the early morning darkness of January 4. Daniel recounts how Rosecrans—on learning of the Confederates' departure—declared victory and occupied Murfreesboro. Daniel argues convincingly that the celebration of this "victory by default" turned the political climate in the North. It rallied, he asserts, a martial spirit that countered anti-war sentiment; stabilized the stock exchange and gold markets; and created a wave of support that ushered in Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation—thus changing the course of the war. ❖



The Spirit of the Appalachian Trail
Susan Power Bratton
(University of Tennessee Press, 2012)

A biologist, ecologist, and religious believer, Bratton introduces her research with reference to her personal relationship to hiking and her interest in understanding connections between religious experience and journeys through wildernesses. Her study of people and places on the Appalachian Trail isn't narrowly focused on religion, however. She offers a multi-dimensional and panoramic view of life along the trail, with descriptions of its physical and social environment, experiences of the people who live in communities along the trail, and, most exhaustively, the background, experiences, and motivations of AT hikers. Based on interviews, surveys, postings, and diaries, as well as her own experience, this research explores hikers' motivations and rewards in broad terms, such as appreciation of nature and its beauty, concern for the environment, desire for a challenge, and the wish to mark a transition in life. Though the concept of "spiritual" remains elusive, Bratton's work offers an interesting, highly informative perspective on a modern-day phenomenon. ❖

Edwina Pendarvis is book editor for *Now & Then*.

A Genealogy

Matt Prater

From the first of them to come out of Pennsylvania
to the last of them to curse in German
when her children made her angry,
there were three generations.

And from the first of them to speak only English
to the first of them to work outside the home,
taking chopped Confederate bones to the blessing heap,
there were three generations more.

And from that first Eleord nurse, to the first
Eleord girl to work at Matheson,
building bombs to heap out German eyes,
there were three generations still.

Twenty years later, Mrs. Eleord
tells her husband "it made sense for you men
to eat your dinner first
back when you all had jobs."

Twenty years after that, Ms. Eleord
tells her daughter, "if Bird Dog Stephenson
gets that job over you, you will
sue this county for everything it's worth."

And now, fourteen generations on, Kasey Eleord
drives around the bend in her new red crew cab Ford. She
picks up her new boyfriend for their date,
and doesn't slide to shotgun when he climbs in.

Matt Prater's poetry has appeared previously in *Now & Then* and in the pages of *Numinous: Spiritual Poetry* and *NANO Fiction Magazine*. From Saltville, Virginia, he is a graduate student at Appalachian State University.

Your HELP WANTED

With the close of this issue, we are making an appeal for your assistance. We want to hear what you think about the magazine.

Since 1984, *Now & Then* has told the stories of Appalachia. For nearly thirty years, we have been guided by the overriding principle to engage our readers in an examination of this place we call, or remember as, home.

Embedded in this issue is a survey card we are asking you to fill out and return to us. Five minutes of your time will help us better meet your needs as a reader.

Thanks!

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Charlie Daniel is editorial cartoonist for the *Knoxville News Sentinel.*